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<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/US99/16776 (22) International Filing Date: 23 July 1999 (23.07.99)  (30) Priority Data: 60/094,131 24 July 1998 (24.07.98) US 60/094,032 24 July 1998 (24.07.98) US 09/165,487 2 October 1998 (02.10.98) US</p> <p>(71) Applicant: MOTOROLA INC. [US/US]; 1303 East Algonquin Road, Schaumburg, IL 60196 (US).</p> <p>(72) Inventors: LADD, David; 4141 Downers Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60615 (US). JOHNSON, Gregory; 565 Iroquois Trail, Carol Stream, IL 60188 (US).</p> <p>(74) Agents: GAUGER, James, E. et al.; Motorola Inc., Intellectual Property Dept., 1303 East Algonquin Road, Schaumburg, IL 60196 (US).</p> <p>(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).</p>		
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<p>(54) Title: VOICE BROWSER FOR INTERACTIVE SERVICES AND METHODS THEREOF</p> <p>(57) Abstract</p> <p>A voice browser to process a markup language document. A voice browser includes a network fetcher unit to retrieve information from a destination of an information source. A parser unit is communicatively coupled to the network fetcher to parse the retrieved information based on predetermined syntax. The parser unit generates a tree structure representing the hierarchy of the retrieved information. An interpreter unit and a state machine are also used. The method includes the steps of retrieving and parsing a markup language document to determine at least one user input, determining whether the user input corresponds to a predetermined grammar, and using the predetermined grammar when the user input corresponds to the predetermined grammar. The method of determining a grammar is based upon phonetic rules and pronunciation. The grammar is sent to a speech recognition engine and compared to a user input.</p>		
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VOICE BROWSER FOR INTERACTIVE SERVICES AND METHODS  
THEREOF

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Field of the Invention

The present invention generally relates to information retrieval, and more particularly, to 20 methods and systems to allow a user to access information from an information source.

Background of the Invention

25 On-line electronic information services are being increasingly utilized by individuals having personal computers to retrieve various types of information. Typically, a user having a personal computer equipped with a modem dials into a service 30 provider, such as an Internet gateway, an on-line service (such as America On-line, CompuServer, or Prodigy), or an electronic bulletin board to download data representative of the information desired by the user.

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The information from the service provider is typically downloaded in real-time (i.e., the information is downloaded contemporaneously with a request for the information). Examples of information downloaded in 5 this manner include electronic versions of newspapers, books (i.e., an encyclopedia), articles, financial information, etc. The information can include both text and graphical in any of these examples.

10

#### Brief Description of the Drawings

The invention is pointed out with particularity in the appended claims. However, other features of the invention will become more apparent and the invention 15 will be best understood by referring to the following detailed description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

- FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an embodiment of a system in accordance with the present invention;
- 20 FIG. 2 is a flow diagram of a method of retrieving information from an information source;
- FIG. 3 is an exemplary block diagram of another embodiment of a system in accordance with the present invention;
- 25 FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a voice browser of the system of FIG. 3;
- FIGS. 5a-5c are flow diagrams of a routine carried out by the voice browser of FIG. 4;
- FIG. 6 is an exemplary markup language document;
- 30 FIG. 7 is a diagrammatic illustration of a hierarchical structure of the markup language document of FIG. 6;
- FIG. 8 is an exemplary state diagram of a markup language document; and

FIG. 9 is another an exemplary state diagram of an exemplary application of a markup language document.

5           Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Before explaining the present embodiments in detail, it should be understood that the invention is not limited in its application or use to the details of 10 construction and arrangement of parts illustrated in the accompanying drawings and description. It will be recognized that the illustrative embodiments of the invention may be implemented or incorporated in other embodiments, variations and modifications, and may be 15 practiced or carried out in various ways. Furthermore, unless otherwise indicated, the terms and expressions employed herein have been chosen for the purpose of describing the illustrative embodiments of the present invention for the convenience of the reader and are not 20 for the purpose of limitation.

Referring now to the drawings, and more particularly to FIG. 1, a block diagram of a system 100 is illustrated to enable a user to access information. The system 100 generally includes one or more network 25 access apparatus 102 (one being shown), an electronic network 104, and one or more information sources or content providers 106 (one being shown).

The electronic network 104 is connected to the network access apparatus 102 via a line 108, and the 30 electronic network 102 is connected to the information source 106 via a line 110. The lines 108 and 110 can include, but are not limited to, a telephone line or link, an ISDN line, a coaxial line, a cable television line, a fiber optic line, a computer network line, a

digital subscriber line, or the like. Alternatively, the network access apparatus 102 and the information source 106 can wirelessly communicate with the electronic network. For example, the electronic network 104 can provide information to the network access apparatus 102 by a satellite communication system, a wireline communication system, or a wireless communication system.

The system 100 enables users to access information from any location in the world via any suitable network access device. The users can include, but are not limited to, cellular subscribers, wireline subscribers, paging subscribers, satellite subscribers, mobile or portable phone subscribers, trunked radio subscribers, computer network subscribers (i.e., internet subscribers, intranet subscribers, etc.), branch office users, and the like.

The users can preferably access information from the information source 106 using voice inputs or commands. For example, the users can access up-to-date information, such as, news updates, designated city weather, traffic conditions, stock quotes, calendar information, user information, address information, and stock market indicators. The system also allows the users to perform various transactions (i.e., order flowers, place orders from restaurants, place buy and sell stock orders, obtain bank account balances, obtain telephone numbers, receive directions to various destinations, etc.).

As shown in FIG. 1, a user utilizes the network access apparatus 102 of the system 100 to communicate and/or connect with the electronic network 104. The electronic network 104 retrieves information from the information source 106 based upon speech commands or

DTMF tones from the user. The information is preferably stored in a database or storage device (not shown) of the information source 106. The information source 106 can include one or more server computers (not shown).

- 5 The information source can be integrated into the electronic network 104 or can be remote from the electronic network (i.e., at a content providers facilities). It will also be recognized that the network access apparatus 102, the electronic network 104, and the information source 106 can be integrated in a single system or device.

The information of the information source 106 can be accessed over any suitable communication medium. The information source 106 can be identified by an electronic address using at least a portion of a URL (Uniform Resource Locator), a URN (Uniform Resource Name), an IP (Internet Protocol) address, an electronic mail address, a device address (i.e. a pager number), a direct point to point connection, a memory address, etc.

- 15 It is noted that a URL can include: a protocol, a domain name, a path, and a filename. URL protocols include: "file:" for accessing a file stored on a local storage medium; "ftp:" for accessing a file from an FTP (file transfer protocol) server; "http:" for accessing an HTML (hypertext marking language) document; "gopher:" for accessing a Gopher server; "mailto:" for sending an e-mail message; "news:" for linking to a Usenet newsgroup; "telnet:" for opening a telnet session; and "wais:" for accessing a WAIS server.

- 30 Once the electronic network 104 of the system 100 receives the information from the information source 106, the electronic network sends the information to the network access apparatus 102. The electronic network 104 can include an open, wide area network such as the

Internet, the World Wide Web (WWW), and/or an on-line service. The electronic network 104 can also include, but is not limited to, an intranet, an extranet, a local area network, a telephone network, (i.e., a public 5 switched telephone network), a cellular telephone network, a personal communication system (PCS) network, a television network (i.e., a cable television system), a paging network (i.e., a local paging network), a regional paging network, a national or a global paging 10 network, an email system, a wireless data network (i.e., a satellite data network or a local wireless data network), and/or a telecommunication node.

The network access apparatus 102 of the system 100 allows the user to access (i.e., view and/or hear) the 15 information retrieved from the information source. The network access apparatus can provided the information to the user as machine readable data, human readable data, audio or speech communications, textual information, graphical or image data, etc. The network access 20 apparatus can have a variety of forms, including but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile phone, an office phone, a home phone, a pay phone, a paging unit, a radio unit, a web phone, a personal information manager (PIM), a personal digital assistant (PDA), a general purpose 25 computer, a network television, an Internet television, an Internet telephone, a portable wireless device, a workstation, or any other suitable communication device. It is contemplated that the network access device can be integrated with the electronic network. For example, 30 the network access device, the electronic network, and/or the information source can reside in a personal computer.

The network access apparatus 102 may also include a voice or web browser, such as, a Netscape Navigator® web

browser, a Microsoft Internet Explorer® web browser, a Mosaic® web browser, etc. It is also contemplated that the network access apparatus 102 can include an optical scanner or bar code reader to read machine readable data, magnetic data, optical data, or the like, and transmit the data to the electronic network 104. For example, the network access apparatus could read or scan a bar code and then provide the scanned data to the electronic network 104 to access the information from the information source (i.e., a menu of a restaurant, banking information, a web page, weather information, etc.).

FIG. 2 illustrates a flow diagram of a method of retrieving information from a destination or database of the information source 106. At block 150, a user calls into the electronic network 104 from a network access apparatus. After the electronic network answers the incoming calls at block 152, the electronic network can attempt to verify that the user is a subscriber of the system and/or the type of network access apparatus the user is calling from. For example, the system may read and decode the automatic number identification (ANI) or caller line identification (CLI) of the call and then determine whether the CLI of the call is found in a stored ANI or CLI list of subscribers. The system may also identify the user by detecting a unique speech pattern from the user (i.e., speaker verification) or a PIN entered using voice commands or DTMF tones.

After the electronic network answers the call, the electronic network provides a prompt or announcement to the caller at block 154 (i.e., "Hi. This is your personal agent. How may I help you"). The electronic network can also set grammars (i.e., vocabulary) and personalities (i.e., male or female voices) for the

call. The electronic network can load the grammars and personalities based upon the CLI, the network access apparatus, or the identity of the user. For example, the grammars and personalities can be set or loaded  
5 depending upon the type of device (i.e., a wireless phone), the gender of the caller (i.e., male or female), the type of language (i.e., English, Spanish, etc.), and the accent of the caller (i.e., a New York accent, a southern accent, an English accent, etc.). It is also  
10 contemplated that the personalities and grammars may be changed by the user or changed by the electronic network based upon the speech communications detected by the electronic network.

At block 156, the electronic network waits for an  
15 input or command from the user that corresponds to a destination of the information source desired by the user. The input can be audio commands (i.e., speech) or DTMF tones. After the electronic network receives the input from the user, the electronic network establishes  
20 a connection or a link to the information source at block 158. The electronic network preferably determines an electronic address of the information source (i.e., URL, a URN, an IP address, or an electronic mail address) based upon the inputs from the user (i.e.,  
25 speech or DTMF tones). The electronic address can be retrieved from a database using a look-up operation based upon at least a portion of the input.

At block 160, the electronic network retrieves at least a portion of the information from the destination  
30 of the information source at block 160. The electronic network processes the information and then provides an output to the user based upon the retrieved information at block 162. The output can include a speech communication, textual information, and/or graphical

information. For example, the electronic network can provide a speech communication using speech-to-text technology or human recorded speech. The process then proceeds to block 164 or block 154 as described above.

5 It will be recognized that the above described method can be carried out by a computer.

Referring now to FIG. 3, an exemplary block diagram of an embodiment of a system 200 to enable a user to access information is shown. The system 200 enables a 10 user to access information from any location in the world via a suitable communication device. The system 200 can provide access to yellow pages, directions, traffic, addresses, movies, concerts, airline 15 information, weather information, new reports, financial information, flowers, personal data, calendar data, address data, gifts, books, etc. The user can also perform a series of transactions without having to terminate the original call to the system. For example, the user can access a news update and obtain weather 20 information, all without having to dial additional numbers or terminate the original call. The system 200 also enables application developers to build applications for interactive speech applications using a markup language, such as VoxML™ voice markup language 25 developed by Motorola, Inc.

The system 200 generally includes one or more communication devices or network access apparatus 201, 202, 203 and 204 (four being shown), an electronic network 206, and one or more information sources, such 30 as content providers 208 and 209 (two being shown) and markup language servers. The user can retrieve the information from the information sources using speech commands or DTMF tones.

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The user can access the electronic network 206 by dialing a single direct access telephone number (i.e., a foreign exchange number, a local number, or a toll-free number or PBX) from the communication device 202. The 5 user can also access the electronic network 206 from the communication device 204 via the internet, from the communication device 203 via a paging network 211, and from the communication device 201 via a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), or an email 10 connection.

The communication devices can include, but are not limited to, landline or wireline devices (i.e., home phones, work phones, computers, facsimile machines, pay phones), wireless devices (i.e., mobile phones, trunked 15 radios, handheld devices, PIMs, PDAs, etc.), network access devices (i.e. computers), pagers, etc. The communication devices can include a microphone, a speaker, and/or a display.

As shown in FIG. 3, the electronic network 206 of 20 the system 200 includes a telecommunication network 210 and a communication node 212. The telecommunication network 210 is preferably connected to the communication node 212 via a high-speed data link, such as, a T1 telephone line, a local area network (LAN), or a wide 25 area network (WAN). The telecommunication network 210 preferably includes a public switched network (PSTN) 214 and a carrier network 216. The telecommunication network 210 can also include international or local exchange networks, cable television network, interexchange 30 carrier networks (IXC) or long distance carrier networks, cellular networks (i.e., mobile switching centers (MSC)), PBXs, satellite systems, and other switching centers such as conventional or trunked radio systems (not shown), etc.

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The PSTN 214 of the telecommunication network 210 can include various types of communication equipment or apparatus, such as ATM networks, Fiber Distributed data networks (FDDI), T1 lines, cable television networks and 5 the like. The carrier network 216 of the telecommunication network 210 generally includes a telephone switching system or central office 218. It will be recognized that the carrier network 216 can be any suitable system that can route calls to the 10 communication node 212, and the telephone switching system 218 can be any suitable wireline or wireless switching system.

The communication node 212 the system 200 is preferably configured to receive and process incoming 15 calls from the carrier network 216 and the internet 220, such as the WWW. The communication node can receive and process pages from the paging network 211 and can also receive and process messages (i.e., emails) from the LAN, WAN or email connection 213.

20 When a user dials into the electronic network 206 from the communication device 202, the carrier network 216 routes the incoming call from the PSTN 214 to the communication node 212 over one or more telephone lines or trunks. The incoming calls preferably enters the 25 carrier network 216 through one or more "888" or "800" INWATS trunk lines, local exchange trunk lines, or long distance trunk lines. It is also contemplated that the incoming calls can be received from a cable network, a cellular system, or any other suitable system.

30 The communication node 212 answers the incoming call from the carrier network 216 and retrieves an appropriate announcement (i.e., a welcome greeting) from a database, server, or browser. The node 212 then plays the announcement to the caller. In response to audio

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inputs from the user, the communication node 212 retrieves information from a destination or database of one or more of the information sources, such as the content providers 208 and 209 or the markup language servers. After the communication node 212 receives the information, the communication node provides a response to the user based upon the retrieved information.

The node 212 can provide various dialog voice personalities (i.e., a female voice, a male voice, etc.) and can implement various grammars (i.e., vocabulary) to detect and respond to the audio inputs from the user. In addition, the communication node can automatically select various speech recognition models (i.e., an English model, a Spanish model, an English accent model, etc.) based upon a user profile, the user's communication device, and/or the user's speech patterns. The communication node 212 can also allow the user to select a particular speech recognition model.

When a user accesses the electronic network 206 from a communication device registered with the system (i.e., a user's home phone, work phone, cellular phone, etc.), the communication node 212 can by-pass a user screening option and automatically identify the user (or the type of the user's communication device) through the use of automatic number identification (ANI) or caller line identification (CLI). After the communication node verifies the call, the node provides a greeting to the user (i.e., "Hi, this is your personal agent, Maya. Welcome Bob. How may I help you?"). The communication node then enters into a dialogue with the user, and the user can select a variety of information offered by the communication node.

When the user accesses the electronic network 206 from a communication device not registered with the

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system (i.e., a payphone, a phone of a non-subscriber, etc.), the node answers the call and prompts the user to enter his or her name and/or a personal identification number (PIN) using speech commands or DTMF tones. The 5 node can also utilize speaker verification to identify a particular speech pattern of the user. If the node authorizes the user to access the system, the node provides a personal greeting to the user (i.e., "Hi, this is your personal agent, Maya. Welcome Ann. How 10 may I help you?"). The node then enters into a dialogue with the user, and the user can select various information offered by the node. If the name and/or PIN of the user cannot be recognized or verified by the node, the user will be routed to a customer service 15 representative.

As shown in FIG. 3, the communication node 212 preferably includes a telephone switch 230, a voice or audio recognition (VRU) client 232, a voice recognition (VRU) server 234, a controller or call control unit 236, 20 an Operation and Maintenance Office (OAM) or a billing server unit 238, a local area network (LAN) 240, an application server unit 242, a database server unit 244, a gateway server or router firewall server 246, a voice over internet protocol (VOIP) unit 248, a voice browser 250, a markup language server 251, and a paging server 252. Although the communication node 206 is shown as being constructed with various types of independent and separate units or devices, the communication node 212 can be implemented by one or more integrated circuits, 25 microprocessors, microcontrollers, or computers which may be programmed to execute the operations or functions equivalent to those performed by the device or units shown. It will also be recognized that the communication node 212 can be carried out in the form of

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hardware components and circuit designs, software or computer programming, or a combination thereof.

The communication node 212 can be located in various geographic locations throughout the world or the  
5 United States (i.e., Chicago, Illinois). The communication node 212 can be operated by one or more carriers (i.e., Sprint PCS, Qwest Communications, MCI, etc.) or independent service providers, such as, for example, Motorola, Inc.

10 The communication node 212 can be co-located or integrated with the carrier network 216 (i.e., an integral part of the network) or can be located at a remote site from the carrier network 216. It is also contemplated that the communication node 212 may be  
15 integrated into a communication device, such as, a wireline or wireless phone, a radio device, a personal computer, a PDA, a PIM, etc. In this arrangement, the communication device can be programmed to connect or link directly into an information source.

20 The communication node 212 can also be configured as a standalone system to allow users to dial directly into the communication node via a toll free number or a direct access number. In addition, the communication node 212 may comprise a telephony switch (i.e., a PBX or  
25 Centrix unit), an enterprise network, or a local area network. In this configuration, the system 200 can be implemented to automatically connect a user to the communication node 212 when the user picks a communication device, such as, the phone.

30 When the telephone switch 230 of the communication node 212 receives an incoming call from the carrier network 216, the call control unit 236 sets up a connection in the switch 230 to the VRU client 232. The communication node 212 then enters into a dialog with

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the user regarding various services and functions. The VRU client 232 preferably generates pre-recorded voice announcements and/or messages to prompt the user to provide inputs to the communication node using speech commands or DTMF tones. In response to the inputs from the user, the node 212 retrieves information from a destination of one of the information sources and provides outputs to the user based upon the information.

The telephone switch 230 of the telecommunication node 212 is preferably connected to the VRU client 232, the VOIP unit 248, and the LAN 240. The telephone switch 230 receives incoming calls from the carrier switch 216. The telephone switch 230 also receives incoming calls from the communication device 204 routed over the internet 220 via the VOIP unit 248. The switch 230 also receives messages and pages from the communication devices 201 and 203, respectively. The telephone switch 230 is preferably a digital cross-connect switch, Model No. LNX, available from Excel Switching Corporation, 255 Independence Drive, Hyannis, MA 02601. It will be recognized that the telephone switch 230 can be any suitable telephone switch.

The VRU client 232 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the VRU server 234 and the LAN 240. The VRU client 232 processes speech communications, DTMF tones, pages, and messages (i.e., emails) from the user. Upon receiving speech communications from the user, the VRU client 232 routes the speech communications to the VRU server 234. When the VRU client 232 detects DTMF tones, the VRU client 232 sends a command to the call control unit 236. It will be recognized that the VRU client 232 can be integrated with the VRU server.

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The VRU client 232 preferably comprises a computer, such as, a Windows NT compatible computer with hardware capable of connecting individual telephone lines directly to the switch 230. The VRU client preferably 5 includes a microprocessor, random access memory, read-only memory, a T1 or ISDN interface board, and one or more voice communication processing board (not shown). The voice communication processing boards of the VRU client 232 are preferably Dialogic boards, Model No. 10 Antares, available from Dialogic Corporation, 1515 Route 10, Parsippany, N.J. 07054. The voice communication boards may include a voice recognition engine having a vocabulary for detecting a speech pattern (i.e., a key word or phrase). The voice recognition engine is 15 preferably a RecServer software package, available from Nuance Communications, 1380 Willow Road, Menlo Park, California 94025.

The VRU client 232 can also include an echo canceler (not shown) to reduce or cancel text-to-speech 20 or playback echoes transmitted from the PSTN 214 due to hybrid impedance mismatches. The echo canceler is preferably included in an Antares Board Support Package, available from Dialogic.

The call control unit 236 of the communication node 25 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240. The call control unit 236 sets up the telephone switch 230 to connect incoming calls to the VRU client 232. The call control unit also sets up incoming calls or pages into the node 212 over the internet 220 and pages and 30 messages sent from the communication devices 201 and 203 via the paging network 203 and email system 213. The control call unit 236 preferably comprises a computer, such as, a Window NT compatible computer.

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The LAN 240 of the communication node 212 allows the various components and devices of the node 212 to communicate with each other via a twisted pair, a fiber optic cable, a coaxial cable, or the like. The LAN 240 5 may use Ethernet, Token Ring, or other suitable types of protocols. The LAN 240 is preferably a 100 Megabit per second Ethernet switch, available from Cisco Systems, San Jose, California. It will be recognized that the LAN 240 can comprise any suitable network system, and 10 the communication node 212 may include a plurality of LANs.

The VRU server 234 of the communication node 212 is connected to the VRU client 232 and the LAN 240. The VRU server 234 receives speech communications from the user 15 via the VRU client 232. The VRU server 234 processes the speech communications and compares the speech communications against a vocabulary or grammar stored in the database server unit 244 or a memory device. The VRU server 234 provides output signals, representing the 20 result of the speech processing, to the LAN 240. The LAN 240 routes the output signal to the call control unit 236, the application server 242, and/or the voice browser 250. The communication node 212 then performs a specific function associated with the output signals.

25 The VRU server 234 preferably includes a text-to-speech (TTS) unit 252, an automatic speech recognition (ASR) unit 254, and a speech-to-text (STT) unit 256. The TTS unit 252 of the VRU server 234 receives textual data or information (i.e., e-mail, web pages, documents, 30 files, etc.) from the application server unit 242, the database server unit 244, the call control unit 236, the gateway server 246, the application server 242, and the voice browser 250. The TTS unit 252 processes the

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textual data and converts the data to voice data or information.

The TTS unit 252 can provide data to the VRU client 232 which reads or plays the data to the user. For 5 example, when the user requests information (i.e., news updates, stock information, traffic conditions, etc.), the communication node 212 retrieves the desired data (i.e., textual information) from a destination of the one or more of the information sources and converts the 10 data via the TTS unit 252 into a response.

The response is then sent to the VRU client 232. The VRU client processes the response and reads an audio message to the user based upon the response. It is contemplated that the VRU server 234 can read the audio 15 message to the user using human recorded speech or synthesized speech. The TTS unit 252 is preferably a TTS 2000 software package, available from Lernout and Hauspie Speech Product NV, 52 Third Avenue, Burlington, Mass. 01803.

20 The ASR unit 254 of the VRU server 234 provides speaker independent automatic speech recognition of speech inputs or communications from the user. It is contemplated that the ASR unit 254 can include speaker dependent speech recognition. The ASR unit 254 25 processes the speech inputs from the user to determine whether a word or a speech pattern matches any of the grammars or vocabulary stored in the database server unit 244 or downloaded from the voice browser. When the ASR unit 254 identifies a selected speech pattern of the 30 speech inputs, the ASR unit 254 sends an output signal to implement the specific function associated with the recognized voice pattern. The ASR unit 254 is preferably a speaker independent speech recognition software package, Model No. RecServer, available from Nuance

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Communications. It is contemplated that the ASR unit 254 can be any suitable speech recognition unit to detect voice communications from a user.

The STT unit 256 of the VRU server 234 receives 5 speech inputs or communications from the user and converts the speech inputs to textual information (i.e., a text message). The textual information can be sent or routed to the communication devices 201, 202, 203 and 204, the content providers 208 and 209, the markup 10 language servers, the voice browser, and the application server 242. The STT unit 256 is preferably a Naturally Speaking software package, available from Dragon Systems, 320 Nevada Street, Newton, MA 02160-9803.

The VOIP unit 248 of the telecommunication node 212 15 is preferably connected to the telephone switch 230 and the LAN 240. The VOIP unit 248 allows a user to access the node 212 via the internet 220 using voice commands. The VOIP unit 240 can receive VOIP protocols (i.e., H.323 protocols) transmitted over the internet 220 and 20 can convert the VOIP protocols to speech information or data. The speech information can then be read to the user via the VRU client 232. The VOIP unit 248 can also receive speech inputs or communications from the user and convert the speech inputs to a VOIP protocol that 25 can be transmitted over the internet 220. The VOIP unit 248 is preferably a Voice Net software package, available from Dialogic Corporation. It will be recognized that the VOIP device can be incorporated into a communication device.

30 The telecommunication node 212 also includes a detection unit 260. The detection unit 260 is preferably a phrase or key word spotter unit to detect incoming audio inputs or communications or DTMF tones from the user. The detector unit 260 is preferably incorporated

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into the switch 230, but can be incorporated into the VRU client 232, the carrier switch 216, or the VRU server 256. The detection unit 260 is preferably included in a RecServer software package, available from  
5 Nuance Communications.

The detection unit 260 records the audio inputs from the user and compares the audio inputs to the vocabulary or grammar stored in the database server unit 244. The detector unit continuously monitors the user's  
10 audio inputs for a key phase or word after the user is connected to the node 212. When the key phrase or word is detected by the detection unit 260, the VRU client 232 plays a pre-recorded message to the user. The VRU client 232 then responds to the audio inputs provided by  
15 the user.

The billing server unit 238 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240. The billing server unit 238 can record data about the use of the communication node by a user (i.e., length of calls,  
20 features accessed by the user, etc.). Upon completion of a call by a user, the call control unit 236 sends data to the billing server unit 238. The data can be subsequently processed by the billing server unit in order to prepare customer bills. The billing server unit  
25 238 can use the ANI or CLI of the communication device to properly bill the user. The billing server unit 238 preferably comprises a Windows NT compatible computer.

The gateway server unit 246 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240 and the  
30 internet 220. The gateway server unit 246 provides access to the content provider 208 and the markup language server 257 via the internet 220. The gateway unit 246 also allows users to access the communication node 212 from the communication device 204 via the

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internet 220. The gateway unit 246 can further function as a firewall to control access to the communication node 212 to authorized users. The gateway unit 246 is preferably a Cisco Router, available from Cisco Systems.

5       The database server unit 244 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240. The database server unit 244 preferably includes a plurality of storage areas to store data relating to users, speech vocabularies, dialogs, personalities, user entered data,  
10 and other information. Preferably, the database server unit 244 stores a personal file or address book. The personal address book can contain information required for the operation of the system, including user reference numbers, personal access codes, personal  
15 account information, contact's addresses, and phone numbers, etc. The database server unit 244 is preferably a computer, such as an NT Window compatible computer.

The application server 242 of the communication  
20 node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240 and the content provider 209. The application server 242 allows the communication node 212 to access information from a destination of the information sources, such as the content providers and markup language servers. For  
25 example, the application server can retrieve information (i.e., weather reports, stock information, traffic reports, restaurants, flower shops, banks, etc.) from a destination of the information sources. The application server 242 processes the retrieved information and  
30 provides the information to the VRU server 234 and the voice browser 250. The VRU server 234 can provide an audio announcement to the user based upon the information using text-to-speech synthesizing or human recorded voice. The application server 242 can also

send tasks or requests (i.e., transactional information) received from the user to the information sources (i.e., a request to place an order for a pizza). The application server 242 can further receive user inputs 5 from the VRU server 234 based upon a speech recognition output. The application server is preferably a computer, such as an NT Windows compatible computer.

The markup language server 251 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240. The 10 markup language server 251 can include a database, scripts, and markup language documents or pages. The markup language server 251 is preferably a computer, such as an NT Window Compatible Computer. It will also be recognized that the markup language server 251 can be 15 an internet server (i.e., a Sun Microsystems server).

The paging server 252 of the communication node 212 is preferably connected to the LAN 240 and the paging network 211. The paging server 252 routes pages between the LAN 240 and the paging network. The paging server 20 252 is preferably a computer, such as a NT compatible computer.

The voice browser 250 of the system 200 is preferably connected to the LAN 240. The voice browser 250 preferably receives information from the information 25 sources, such as the content provider 209 via the application server 242, the markup language servers 251 and 257, the database 244, and the content provider 208. In response to voice inputs from the user or DTMF tones, the voice browser 250 generates a content request (i.e., 30 an electronic address) to navigate to a destination of one or more of the information sources. The content request can use at least a portion of a URL, a URN, an IP, a page request, or an electronic email.

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After the voice browser is connected to an information source, the voice browser preferably uses a TCP/IP connect to pass requests to the information source. The information source responds to the 5 requests, sending at least a portion of the requested information, represented in electronic form, to the voice browser. The information can be stored in a database of the information source and can include text content, markup language document or pages, non-text 10 content, dialogs, audio sample data, recognition grammars, etc. The voice browser then parses and interprets the information as further described below. It will be recognized that the voice browser can be integrated into the communication devices 201, 202, 203, 15 and 204.

As shown in FIG. 3, the content provider 209 is connected to the application server 244 of the communication node 212, and the content provider 208 is connected to the gateway server 246 of the communication 20 node 212 via the internet 220. The content providers can store various content information, such as news, weather, traffic conditions, etc. The content providers 208 and 209 can include a server to operate web pages or documents in the form of a markup language. The content 25 providers 208 and 209 can also include a database, scripts, and/or markup language documents or pages. The scripts can include images, audio, grammars, computer programs, etc. The content providers execute suitable server software to send requested information to the 30 voice browser.

Referring now to FIG. 4, a block diagram of the voice browser 250 of the communication node 212 is illustrated. The voice browser 250 generally includes a network fetcher unit 300, a parser unit 302, an

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interpreter unit 304, and a state machine unit 306. Although the voice browser is shown as being constructed with various types of independent and separate units or devices, it will be recognized that the voice browser 5 250 can be carried out in the form of hardware components and circuit designs, software or computer programming, or a combination thereof.

The network fetcher 300 of the voice browser 250 is connected to the parser 302 and the interpreter 304. 10 The network fetcher 300 is also connected to the LAN 240 of the communication node 212. The network fetcher unit 304 retrieves information, including markup language documents, audio samples and grammars from the information sources. 15 The parser unit 302 of the voice browser 250 is connected to the network fetcher unit 300 and the state machine unit 306. The parser unit 302 receives the information from the network fetcher unit 300 and parses the information according to the syntax rules of the 20 markup language as further described below (i.e., extensible markup language syntax). The parser unit 302 generates a tree or heirarchical structure representing the markup language that is stored in memory of the state machine unit 306. A tree structure of an 25 exemplary markup language document is shown in FIG. 7.

The following text defines the syntax and grammar that the parser unit of the voice browser utilizes to build a tree structure of the markup language document.

30       <!ELEMENT dialog (step|class)\*>  
          <!ATTLIST dialog bargein (Y|N) "Y">  
          <!ELEMENT step  
(prompt|input|help|error|cancel|ack)\*>  
          <!ATTLIST step name ID #REQUIRED  
                    parent IDREF #IMPLIED  
                    bargein (Y|N) "Y"  
                    cost CDATA #IMPLIED>  
35

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```
<!ELEMENT class (prompt|help|error|cancel|ack)*>
<!ATTLIST class name ID #REQUIRED
      parent IDREF #IMPLIED
      bargein (Y|N) "Y"
      cost CDATA #IMPLIED>
5   <!ELEMENT prompt
      (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
      <!ELEMENT emp
      (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
10  <!ATTLIST emp level (strong|moderate|none|reduced)
      "moderate">
      <!ELEMENT pros
      (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
      <!ATTLIST pros rate CDATA #IMPLIED
15  vol CDATA #IMPLIED
      pitch CDATA #IMPLIED
      range CDATA #IMPLIED>
      <!ELEMENT help
      (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
20  <!ATTLIST help ordinal CDATA #IMPLIED
      reprompt (Y|N) "N"
      next CDATA #IMPLIED
      nextmethod (get|post) "get">
      <!ELEMENT error
25  (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
      <!ATTLIST error type NMOKENS "ALL"
      ordinal CDATA #IMPLIED
      reprompt (Y|N) "N"
      next CDATA #IMPLIED
30  nextmethod (get|post) "get">
      <!ELEMENT cancel
      (#PCDATA|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
      <!ATTLIST cancel next CDATA #REQUIRED
      nextmethod (get|post) "get">
35  <!ELEMENT audio EMPTY>
      <!ATTLIST audio src CDATA #REQUIRED>
      <!ELEMENT ack
      (#PCDATA|options|value|emp|break|pros|audio)*>
      <!ATTLIST ack confirm NMOKEN "YORN"
40  background (Y|N) "N"
      reprompt (Y|N) "N">
      <!ELEMENT input
      (option|response|rename|switch|case)*>
      <!ATTLIST input type
45  (none|optionlist|record|grammar|profile|hidden|
      yarn|digits|number|time|date|money|phone) #REQUIRED
      name ID #IMPLIED
      next CDATA #IMPLIED
      nextmethod (get|post) "get"
      timeout CDATA #IMPLIED
50  min CDATA #IMPLIED
```

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```
max CDATA #IMPLIED
profname NMOKEN #IMPLIED
subtype NMOKEN #IMPLIED
src CDATA #IMPLIED
value CDATA #IMPLIED
msecs CDATA #IMPLIED
storage (file|request) #REQUIRED
format CDATA #IMPLIED>
5      <!ELEMENT switch (case|switch)*>
<!ATTLIST switch field NMOKEN #REQUIRED>
<!ELEMENT response (switch)*>
<!ATTLIST response next CDATA #IMPLIED
               nextmethod (get|post) "get"
               fields NMOKENS #REQUIRED>
10     <!ELEMENT rename EMPTY>
<!ATTLIST rename varname NMOKEN #REQUIRED
               rename NMOKEN #REQUIRED>
<!ELEMENT case EMPTY>
<!ATTLIST case value CDATA #REQUIRED
20     next CDATA #REQUIRED
               nextmethod (get|post) "get">
<!ELEMENT value EMPTY>
<!ATTLIST value name NMOKEN #REQUIRED>
<!ELEMENT break EMPTY>
25     <!ATTLIST break msecs CDATA #IMPLIED
               size (none|small|medium|large)
"medium">
               <!ELEMENT options EMPTY>
               <!ELEMENT or EMPTY>
30     <!ELEMENT option (#PCDATA|value|or)*>
               <!ATTLIST option value CDATA #IMPLIED
               next CDATA #IMPLIED
               nextmethod (get|post) "get">

35     Referring again to FIG. 4, the interpreter unit 304
of the voice browser 250 is connected to the state
machine unit 306 and the network fetcher unit 300. The
interpreter unit 304 is also connected to the LAN. The
interpreter unit 304 carries out a dialog with the user
40 based upon the tree structure representing a markup
language document. The interpreter unit sends data to
the TTS 252. The interpreter unit 304 can also receive
data based upon inputs from the user via a VRU server
and can send outputs to the information source based
45 upon the user inputs.
```

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The interpreter unit 304 can transition from state to state (i.e., step to step) within a tree structure (i.e., a dialog) of a markup language document or can transition to a new tree structure within the same 5 dialog or another dialog. The interpreter unit determines the next state or step based upon the structure of the dialog and the inputs from the user. When the interpreter unit transitions to a new dialog or page, the address of the new dialog or page is then sent 10 to the network fetcher.

The state machine 306 of the voice browser 250 is connected to the parser unit 302 and the interpreter unit 304. The state machine 306 stores the tree structure of the markup language and maintains the 15 current state or step that the voice browser is executing.

FIGS. 5a-5c illustrate a flow diagram of a software routine executed by the voice browser 250 . The software routine allows interactive voice applications. At block 20 400, the voice browser 250 determines an initial address (i.e., a URL) and a step element or name. The voice browser then fetches the contents (i.e., a markup or language document) of the current address from the information sources (i.e., content providers and markup 25 language servers) at block 402. After the voice browser fetches the address, the voice browser processes the contents and builds a local step table (i.e., a tree structure) at block 404.

At block 406, a prompt can be played to the user 30 via the TTS unit of the system 200 for the current element. The voice browser then waits for an input from the user (i.e., speech or DTMF tones). At block 408, the voice browser can collect input from the user for the current step element. FIG. 5c shows an exemplary

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flow diagram of a routine that is executed by the voice browser to determine the grammar for speech recognition.

At block 502, the voice browser determines whether a pre-determined grammar exists for the user input and 5 the markup language. For example, the voice browser determines whether the grammar for the user input is found in a predetermined or pre-existing grammar stored in a database or contained in the markup language. If the grammar is found, the voice browser sends the 10 grammar to the VRU server at block 504. At block 506, the VRU server compares the user input to the grammar to recognize the user input. After the VRU server recognizes the user input, the process proceeds to block 410 (see FIG. 5a) as described below.

15 If a pre-existing grammar is not found at block 502, the voice browser dynamically generates the grammar for the user input. At block 508, the voice browser looks up the pronunciations for the user in a dictionary at block 508. The dictionary can be stored in a 20 database of the system or stored on an external database (i.e., the voice browser can fetch a dictionary from the processor or from the internet).

At block 510, the voice browser generates the grammar for the user inputs based upon the 25 pronunciations from the dictionary and phonetic rules. A software routine available from Nuance Communication, Model No. RecServer, can be used to generate the grammar. At block 512, the grammar is sent to the VRU server. The voice browser then attempts to match the 30 grammar to the user input at block 506.

After the voice browser detects or collects an input from the user at block 408, the voice browser determines whether there is an error at block 410. If the voice browser is having difficulty recognizing

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inputs from the user or detects a recognition error, a timeout error, etc., an appropriate error message is played to the user at block 414. For example, if the voice browser detected too much speech from the user or 5 the recognition is too slow, a prompt is played (i.e., "Sorry, I didn't understand you") to the user via the VRU server. If the voice browser receives unexpected DTMF tones, a prompt is played (i.e., "I heard tones. Please speak your response") to the user via the VRU 10 server. If the voice browser does not detect any speech from the user, a prompt is read to the user (i.e., "I am having difficulty hearing you").

At block 416, the voice browser determines whether a re-prompt was specified in the error response or 15 element. If a re-prompt is to be played to the user at block 416, the process proceeds to block 406 as described above. If a re-prompt is not to be played to the user at block 416, the voice browser determines whether there is a next step element specified in the 20 error response at block 420. If another step element is specified in the error response at block 420, the process proceed to block 402 as described above. If another step element is not specific in the error response at block 420, the process proceeds to block 25 422.

If the voice browser does not detect a recognition error at block 410, the voice browser determines whether the user requested help at block 412. If the user requested help, an appropriate help response is played 30 to the user (i.e., "please enter or speak your pin") at block 424.

At block 425, the voice browser determines whether a re-prompt was specified in the help response or step. If a re-prompt is specified in the help response at

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- block 425, the process proceeds to block 406 as described above. If a re-prompt is not specified in the help response at block 425, the voice browser determines whether a next step element is specified in the help 5 response at block 426. If another step element is specified in the help response at block 426, the process proceeds to block 402 as described above. If another step element is not specific in the help response at block 426, the process proceeds to block 428.
- 10 At block 430, the voice browser determines whether a cancel request has been indicated by the user. If the voice browser detects a cancel request from the user at block 430, an appropriate cancel message is played to the user at block 434 (i.e., "Do you wish to exit and 15 return to the Main Menu?").

At block 436, the voice browser then determines whether there a next step element is specified in the cancel response or element. If another step element is specified in the cancel response at block 436, the 20 process proceeds to block 448. If another step element is not specified in the error response at block 436, the process proceeds to block 422.

If a cancel request was not detected at block 430, the voice browser determines the next step element at 25 block 432. At block 440, the voice browser determines whether there is an acknowledgement specified in the next step element. If there is no acknowledgement specified in the step element at block 440, the voice browser sets the current step element to the next step 30 element at block 442 and then determines whether the next step element is within the same page at block 444.

If the next step element is within the same page as the current step element at block 444, the process proceeds to block 446. If the next step element is not

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within the same page as the current page at block 444, the process proceeds to block 448.

- If an acknowledgement is specified in the next step element at block 440, an acknowledgement response is
- 5 played to the user at block 450. The voice browser then determines whether a confirmation is specified in the information (i.e., a markup language document) at block 452. If a confirmation is not specified in the information at block 452, the process proceeds to block 10 442 as described above. If a confirmation is specified at block 452, the voice browser determines whether the response was recognized from the user at block 454 and then determines whether the response is affirmative at block 456.
- 15 If the voice browser receives an affirmative response at block 456, the process proceeds to block 442 as described above. If the voice browser does not receive an affirmative response from the user at block 456, the process proceeds to block 448.
- 20 The following text describes an exemplary markup language processed by the voice browser of the communication node 212. The markup language preferably includes text, recorded sound samples, navigational controls, and input controls for voice applications as 25 further described below. The markup language enables system designers or developers of service or content providers to create application programs for instructing the voice browser to provide a desired user interactive voice service. The markup language also enables 30 designers to dynamically customize their content. For example, designers can provide up-to-date news, weather, traffic, etc.
- The markup language can be designed to express flow of control, state management, and the content of

information flow between the communication node 212 and the user. The structure of the language can be designed specifically for voice applications and the markup language is preferably designed and delivered in units  
5 of dialog.

The markup language can include elements that describe the structure of a document or page, provide pronunciation of words and phrases, and place markers in the text to control interactive voice services. The  
10 markup language also provides elements that control phrasing, emphasis, pitch, speaking rate, and other characteristics. The markup language documents are preferably stored on databases of the information sources, such as the content providers 208 and 209 and  
15 the markup language servers 251 and 257.

FIG. 6 illustrates an exemplary markup language document that the voice browser of the communication node can process. The markup language document has a hierarchical structure, in which every element (except  
20 the dialog element) is contained by another element. Elements between another elements are defined to be children or a lower element of the tree. FIG. 7 illustrates a tree structure of the markup language document of FIG. 6.

25 As shown in FIG. 6, the markup language document includes tags, denoted by <> symbols, with the actual element between the brackets. The markup language includes start tags ("< >") and end tags ("</ >"). A start tag begins a markup element and the end tags ends  
30 the corresponding markup element. For example, in the markup language document as shown in FIG. 6, the DIALOG element (<dialog>) on line 2 begins a markup language document or page, and the dialog element (<dialog>) on line 26 indicates the markup language document has

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ended. The elements often have attributes which are assigned values as further described below.

The DIALOG element and STEP elements of a markup language document provide the basic structure of the 5 document. The DIALOG element defines the scope of the markup language document, and all other elements are contained by the DIALOG element. The STEP elements define states within a DIALOG element (i.e., the STEP element defines an application state). For example, an 10 application state can include initial prompts, help messages, error messages, or cleanup and exit procedures.

The DIALOG element and the associated STEP elements of a markup language document define a state machine 15 that represents an interactive dialogue between the voice browser and the user. When the voice browser interprets the markup language document, the voice browser will navigate through the DIALOG element to different STEP elements as a result of the user's 20 responses.

The following example illustrates an exemplary markup language document that the voice browser of the communication node can process. The example has one DIALOG element and two STEP elements.

```
25    <?XML VERSION="1.0"?>
        <DIALOG>
            <STEP NAME="init">
                <PROMPT> Please select a soft drink.
            </PROMPT>
        30        <HELP> Your choices are coke, pepsi, 7 up,
                    or root beer. </HELP>
                    <INPUT TYPE="optionlist" NAME="drink">
                        <OPTION NEXT="#confirm"> coke </OPTION>
                        <OPTION NEXT="#confirm"> pepsi </OPTION>
                        <OPTION NEXT="#confirm"> 7 up </OPTION>
                        <OPTION NEXT="#confirm"> root beer </OPTION>
                    </INPUT>
            </STEP>
        35        <STEP NAME="confirm">
```

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```
<PROMPT> You ordered a <VALUE NAME="drink"/>.  
</PROMPT>  
</STEP>  
</DIALOG>
```

5

When the above markup language document is interpreted by the voice browser, the voice browser initially executes the STEP element called "init". First, the user will hear the text contained by the 10 prompt element (i.e., "Please select a soft drink."). If the user responds "help" before making a selection, the user would hear the text contained with the HELP element (i.e., "Your choices are coke, pepsi, 7up, or root beer."). After the user makes a selection, the 15 voice browser will execute the STEP element named "confirm", which will read back the user's selection and then exit the application. It is noted that the STEP elements in a markup language document are executed based on the user's responses not on the order of the 20 STEP elements within the source file. Although the definition of the "init" STEP element appears before and the definition of the "confirm" STEP element, the order in which they are defined has no impact on the order in which the voice browser navigates through them.

25 The following text describes the markup language elements, their attributes, and their syntax. The DIALOG element of the markup language (i.e., <DIALOG [BARGEIN="value"]> markup language document </DIALOG>) is the fundamental element of the markup language. The 30 DIALOG element includes a BARGEIN attribute. The value of the BARGEIN attribute can be "Y" and "N". The BARGEIN attribute allows the DIALOG element to be interrupted at any time based upon a predetermined response from the user (i.e., wake up).

35 The DIALOG element defines the basic unit of context within an application, and typically, there is

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one DIALOG element per address (i.e., URL). Each DIALOG element contains one STEP element named "init". The execution of the DIALOG element begins with the STEP named "init".

5       The following example of a markup language document or page contains the DIALOG element.

```
<DIALOG>
  <STEP NAME="init">
    <PROMPT> Welcome to VoxML™ voice markup
10   language. </PROMPT>
  </STEP>
</DIALOG>
```

15     In the example above, the DIALOG element contains a single STEP element named "init". The STEP element has a single PROMPT element that will be read to the user via the text-to-speech unit 252. Since there is no INPUT element defined in the STEP element, the markup language application will terminate immediately after 20 the PROMPT element is read.

The STEP element of the markup language (i.e., <STEP NAME="value" [PARENT="value"] [BARGEIN="value"] [COST="value"] > text </STEP>) defines a state in a markup language document or page. The STEP element is 25 contained by a DIALOG element. The STEP element includes a NAME attribute, a PARENT attribute, a BARGEIN attribute, and a COST attribute. The value of the NAME and PARENT attribute can be an identifier (i.e., a pointer or a variable name), the value of the BARGEIN 30 attribute can be "Y" and "N", and the value of the COST attribute can be an integer.

The STEP element typically has an associated PROMPT element and INPUT element that define the application state. The following example illustrates the use of the 35 STEP element in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="askpython" PARENT="tvrating">
```

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```
<PROMPT> Please rate Monty Python's Flying  
Circus  
on a scale of 1 to 10. </PROMPT>  
<INPUT NAME="python" TYPE="number"  
5 NEXT="#drwho" />  
</STEP>
```

The example shown above illustrates a STEP element that collects the user's opinion on one of several 10 public television shows. The STEP element uses the PARENT attribute to share a common set of help and error elements with other TV-show-rating STEP elements. For example, the PARENT attribute can contain a HELP element explaining what a rating of 1, 5, and 10 would mean, and 15 a common error message can remind the user that a numeric rating is expected.

The PROMPT element of the markup language (i.e., <PROMPT> text </PROMPT>) is used to define content (i.e., text or an audio file) that is to be presented to 20 the user. Typically, the PROMPT element will contain text and several markup elements (i.e., the BREAK or EMP elements as described below) that are read to the user via the text-to-speech unit.

The PROMPT element can be contained within a STEP 25 or a CLASS element. The following example illustrates the use of the PROMPT element in markup language document or page.

```
<STEP NAME="init">  
  <PROMPT> How old are you? </PROMPT>  
  <INPUT TYPE="number" NAME="age"  
30 NEXT="#weight"/>  
  </STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the text "How old are 35 you?" will be played to the user via the text-to-speech unit, and then the voice browser will wait for the user to say his or her age.

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The INPUT element of the markup language is used to define a valid user input within each STEP element. The INPUT element is contained within a STEP element. The INPUT element of the markup language includes an INPUT attribute. The value of the INPUT attribute can be a DATE input, a DIGIT input, a FORM input, a GRAMMAR input, a HIDDEN input, a MONEY input, a NONE element, a NUMBER input, an OPTIONLIST input, a PHONE input, a PROFILE input, a RECORD input, a TIME input, and a YORN element.

The DATE input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="DATE" NAME="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIsMEOUT="value"] />) is used to collect a calendar date from the user. The DATE input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be the next STEP address (i.e., a URL). The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post (i.e., an input into a Java Script program or a markup language server), and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

The following example illustrates the use of the DATE input in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="init">
<PROMPT> What is your date of birth? <PROMPT>
<INPUT TYPE="date" NAME="dob" NEXT="#soc"/>
</STEP>
```

In the example above, the DATE input is used to gather the user's birthday, store it in a variable "dob", and then go to the STEP element named "soc". The DATE input makes use of an input grammar to interpret the user's response and store that response in a standard format.

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The DATE input grammar can interpret dates expressed in several different formats. A fully defined date, such as, "next Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1998" is stored as "07101998|July|10|1998|Friday|next". If the date 5 cannot be determined by the user's response, the ambiguous parts of the response will be omitted from the data. The response "July 4<sup>th</sup>", is stored as "????????|July|4|||", "Tomorrow" becomes "????????||||tomorrow", "The 15<sup>th</sup>" is stored as 10 "????????||15|||", and "Monday" becomes "????????|||Monday||".

The DIGITS input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="DIGITS" NAME="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] 15 [MIN="value"] [MAX="value"] />) is used to collect a series of digits from the user. The DIGITS input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, a TIMEOUT attribute, a MIN attribute, and a MAX attribute. The value of the NAME 20 attribute can be an identifier, the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds. The value of the 25 MIN and MAX attributes can be minimum and maximum integer values, respectively.

The following example illustrates the use the DIGITS input in a markup language document or page.

```
<STEP NAME="init">
    <PROMPT> Please say your pin now. </PROMPT>
    <INPUT TYPE="digits" NAME="pin"
NEXT="#doit"/>
</STEP>
```

35 In the example above, the DIGITS input is used to collect digits from the user, store the number in the a

variable named "pin", and then go to the STEP named "doit". If the user were to speak, "four five six", in response to the PROMPT element, the value "456" would be stored in the variable "pin". The DIGITS input can 5 collect the digits 0 (zero) through 9 (nine), but not other numbers like 20 (twenty). To collect double-digit numbers (i.e., 20 (twenty) or 400 (four-hundred), the NUMBER input can be used as further described below.

The FORM input of INPUT attribute of the markup 10 language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="FORM" NAME="value" METHOD="value" ACTION="value" TIMEOUT="value" /> is used to collect input from the user, convert the input to text using the speech to text unit, and send the text to the markup language server. The FORM input includes a 15 NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a METHOD attribute, an ACTION attribute and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL, pointer or memory address). The value of the 20 METHOD attribute can be a get or a post, and the value of the ACTION attribute is a pointer to a script that processes the input on the server. The value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

25 The FORM input makes use of the speech to text unit to convert user input to text. The user input is then sent to the markup language server in a standard HTML <FORM> text format to be processed by a script on the server. If the user said "John Smith" then the text 30 string "john smith" would be sent to the server using the pointer and address indicated by the ACTION attribute using the method indicated by the METHOD attribute in a <FORM> format.

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The following is an example of the use of the FORM input in a markup language document.

```
5      <STEP NAME="order form">
          <PROMPT> What you like to order? </PROMPT>
          <INPUT TYPE="form" NAME="order" NEXT="#next
          order" METHOD="post"
          ACTION="http://www.test.com/cgi-bin/post-
          query"  
10     TIMEOUT="200" />
      </STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the FORM input is used to collect an order input from the user, store the user input converted to text in the variable named "order",  
15 go to the next step named "next order", post the text to the address "http://www.test.com/cgi-bin/post-query", and use a timeout value of 200 milliseconds.

The GRAMMAR input of the INPUT attribute of  
20 the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"  
SRC="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"]  
[TIMEOUT="value"] />, <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR" SRC="value"  
NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"]>  
RENAME elements </INPUT>, or <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"  
25 SRC="value" [TIMEOUT="value"] [NEXT="value"  
[NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] > RESPONSE elements </INPUT>) is  
used to specify an input grammar when interpreting the  
user's responses. The GRAMMAR input includes a SCR  
attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and  
30 a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the SCR attribute can  
be a grammar address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the  
NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL).  
The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a  
post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a  
35 number represented in milliseconds.

The following example illustrates the use of the GRAMMAR input in a markup language document.

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```
<STEP NAME="init">
  <PROMPT> Say the month and year in which the
            credit card expires. </PROMPT>
  <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"
5           SRC="gram://.SomeGrammar/month/year"
           NEXT="#stepNineteen"/>
</STEP>
```

The above example illustrates the use of the  
10 GRAMMAR input to generate a predetermined grammar  
corresponding to a month and year from the user, store  
the interpreted values in variables named "month" and  
"year", and then go to the step named "stepNineteen".

The HIDDEN input of the INPUT attribute of the  
15 markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="HIDDEN" NAME="value"  
VALUE="value"/>) is used to store a value in a variable.  
The HIDDEN input includes a NAME attribute and a VALUE  
attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an  
identifier, and the value of the VALUE attribute can be  
20 a literal value.

The following example illustrates the use of the  
HIDDEN input in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="init">
  <PROMPT> Login sequence complete.
            Are you ready to place your order?
            </PROMPT>
  <INPUT TYPE="hidden" NAME="firstname"
        VALUE="Bill"/>
  <INPUT TYPE="hidden" NAME="lastname"
        VALUE="Clinton"/>
  <INPUT TYPE="hidden" NAME="favorite"
        VALUE="fries"/>
  <INPUT TYPE="optionlist">
    <OPTION NEXT="#order"> yes </OPTION>
    <OPTION NEXT="#wait"> not yet </OPTION>
  </INPUT>
</STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the HIDDEN input is  
40 used to create variables and assign values to those  
variables. In this example, the user has completed the  
login sequence and certain information is stored in

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variables as soon as the user's identity has been established. This information could then be used later in the application without requiring another access into the database.

5       The MONEY input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="MONEY" NAME="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] />) is used to collect monetary amounts from the user. The MONEY input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, 10 a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL). The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the 15 TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

The MONEY input makes use of an input grammar to interpret the user's response and store that response in a standard format. The input grammar is able to 20 interpret various ways to express monetary amounts. The data is preferably stored in integer format, in terms of cents. "Five cents" is stored as "5", "five dollars" is stored as "500", and "a thousand" is stored as "100000". In the case where the units are ambiguous, the grammar 25 assumes dollars, in which "a thousand" is stored as if the user had said "a thousand dollars".

The following example illustrates the use of the MONEY input in a markup language document.

```
30       <STEP NAME="init">
            <PROMPT> How much would you like to deposit?
            </PROMPT>
            <INPUT TYPE="money" NAME="dep"
            NEXT="#deposit"/>
        </STEP>
```

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The example shown above, the MONEY input is used to collect the amount of money that the user would like to deposit in his account, store that amount in a variable named "dep", and then go to the STEP named "deposit".

- 5       The NONE input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] />) is used to specify the next location for the voice browser to go to continue execution when no response is collected from the user.
- 10      The NONE input includes a NEXT attribute and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post.

15      The following example illustrates the use of the NONE input in a markup language.

```
<STEP NAME="init">
    <PROMPT> Welcome to the system. </PROMPT>
    <INPUT TYPE="none" NEXT="#mainmenu"/>
</STEP>
```

- 20      In the example shown above, the NONE input is used to jump to another STEP element in this dialog without waiting for any user response. In this example, the user would hear the phrase "Welcome to the system"
- 25      followed immediately by the prompt of the main menu.

20      The NUMBER input of INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="NUMBER" NAME="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] />) is used to collect numbers from the user. The NUMBER input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL). The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the

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TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

The following example illustrates the use of the NUMBER input in a markup language document or page.

```
5      <STEP NAME="init">
          <PROMPT> Please say your age now. </PROMPT>
          <INPUT TYPE="number" NAME="age"
NEXT="#doit"/>
        </STEP>
```

10

In the example shown above, the NUMBER input is used to collect numbers from the user, store the number in a variable named "age", and then go to the STEP element named "doit". If the user were to say, 15 "eighteen", in response to the PROMPT element, the value "18" would be stored in the variable "age". The NUMBER input will collect numbers like 20 (i.e. twenty), but only one number per input. To collect a series of digits like "four five six" (i.e. "456"), the DIGITS 20 input can be used as described above.

The OPTIONLIST input of INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST" [NAME="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] > OPTION elements </INPUT>) is 25 used to specify a list of options from which the user can select. The OPTIONLIST input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT 30 attribute can be a next step URL. The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

The OPTIONLIST input is used in conjunction with 35 the OPTION element, which defines the specific user responses and the behavior associated with each OPTION

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element. The following example illustrates the use of the OPTIONLIST element in a markup language document.

```
5   <STEP NAME="init">
    <PROMPT> What would you like to drink?
  5   </PROMPT>
    <INPUT TYPE="optionlist">
      <OPTION NEXT="#coke"> coke </OPTION>
      <OPTION NEXT="#coke"> coca-cola </OPTION>
  10  <OPTION NEXT="#pepsi"> pepsi </OPTION>
      <OPTION NEXT="#rc"> r c </OPTION>
    </INPUT>
  </STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the voice browser will  
15 go to a different STEP element or state depending on which cola the user selects. If the user said "coke" or "coca-cola", the voice browser would go to the STEP element named "coke".

The PHONE input of INPUT attribute of the markup  
20 language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="PHONE" NAME="value"  
NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] />) is used to collect telephone numbers from the user. The PHONE input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The  
25 value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL). The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in  
30 milliseconds.

The PHONE input makes use of an input grammar to interpret the user's response and store that response in a standard format. The phone number is interpreted as a string of digits and stored in a variable. If a user  
35 said "One, eight zero zero, seven five nine, eight eight eight eight", the response would be stored as "18007598888".

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The following is an example of the use of the PHONE input in a markup language document.

```
5      <STEP NAME="phone">
          <PROMPT> What is your phone number? </PROMPT>
          <INPUT TYPE="phone" NAME="ph" NEXT="#fax"/>
</STEP>
```

In this example shown above, the PHONE input is used to collect a telephone number from the user, store 10 the number in the variable named "ph", and go to the STEP named "fax".

The PROFILE input of INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="PROFILE" NAME="value" PROFNAME="value" [SUBTYPE="value"] />) is used to 15 collect the user's profile information (i.e, first name, last name, mailing address, email address, and notification address). The user profile information is stored in the database 244 of the system.

The PROFILE input includes a NAME attribute, a 20 PROFNAME attribute, and a SUBTYPE attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, the value of the PROFNAME attribute can be a profile element name (string), and the value of the SUBTYPE attribute can be profile element subtype (string).

25 The following example illustrates the use of the PROFILE input in a markup language document.

```
30      <STEP NAME="getinfo">
              <INPUT TYPE="profile" NAME="firstname"
                  PROFNAME="N" SUBTYPE="first"/>
              <PROMPT> Hello, <VALUE NAME="firstname"/>.
                  Please say your pin. </PROMPT>
              <INPUT TYPE="digits" NAME="pin"
                  NEXT="#verify"/>
</STEP>
```

35

In the example above, the PROFILE input is used to retrieve the user's first name and store the string in a variable named "firstname". The string containing the

name is then inserted into the PROMPT element using a VALUE element as further described below. When using the PROFILE input, more than one INPUT element can be included in the same STEP element because the PROFILE  
 5 input is not an interactive INPUT element. Each STEP element contains only one INPUT element that accepts a response from the user.

The following table lists the valid combinations of profile names and their associated subtypes

10

Profile Name	Subtype	Description
ADR 15 address	POSTAL	postal address
	PARCEL	parcel address
	HOME	home address
	WORK	work address
	DOM	domestic address
	INTL	international
BDAY 20 email address	none	birthday
EMAIL address	none	primary email
NOTIFICATION notification		
FN 25 GEO (longitude; latitude)	none	formatted name
KEY key	none	geographic location
KEY key	none	public encryption
LABEL 30 MAILER	none	mailing label
N	none	email program used
35 Mrs., Dr.)	FIRST	first name
	LAST	last name
	MIDDLE	middle name
	PREFIX	prefix (e.g. Mr.,

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D.D.S, M.D.)	SUFFIX	suffix (e.g. Jr.,
<u>ORG</u>	none	organization
ROLE 5 <u>position</u>	none	job role or
TEL number 10      number	HOME	home telephone
number	WORK	work telephone
10      number	MSG	voicemail telephone
telephone number	VOICE	voice call
15      number	FAX	fax call telephone
number	CELL	cellular telephone
number	PREF	preferred telephone
20 <u>TITLE</u>	none	job title
<u>TZ</u>	none	time zone
<u>UID</u>	none	globally unique id
<u>URL</u>	none	URL of home page
VERSION	none	version of Vcard

25      The notification address shown above can be used to send a user urgent or timely information (i.e., sending information to a pager). The format of the notification address is preferably of an email address provided by the user when his or her subscription is activated. The 30 user's notification address would be stored a variable named "n\_addr". The application could then use this email address to send a message to the user. To retrieve the notification address from the voice browser, the PROFILE input can be used in a markup 35 language document in the following manner:

```
<INPUT TYPE="profile" NAME="n_addr"
      PROFNAME="email" SUBTYPE="notification"/>
```

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The RECORD input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="RECORD" TIMEOUT="value" STORAGE="value" [FORMAT="value"] [NAME="value"] NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] />) is used to record an audio sample and to store that audio sample in a specified location. The RECORD input includes a TIMEOUT attribute, a FORMAT attribute, a NAME attribute, a STORAGE attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be the maximum record time represented in milliseconds, the value of the FORMAT attribute can be a recorded audio format (audio/wav), the value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, the value of the STORAGE attribute can be a file and a request, the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get, post and put.

The following two examples illustrate the RECORD input in a markup language document.

```
20      <STEP NAME="init">
          <PROMPT> Please say your first and last name.
          </PROMPT>
          <INPUT TYPE="record" TIMEOUT="7000"
            NAME="theName" STORAGE="REQUEST"
            NEXT="http://wavhost/acceptwav.asp"
            NEXTMETHOD="POST" />
        </STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the RECORD input is used to record a seven second audio sample, and then "POST" that sample to the remote machine named "wavhost". The response to the "POST" has to be a dialog which continues the execution of the application.

```
35      <STEP NAME="init">
          <PROMPT> Please say your first and last name.
          </PROMPT>
          <INPUT TYPE="record" TIMEOUT="7000"
            NAME="theName" STORAGE="FILE"
            NEXT="#reccomplete" NEXTMETHOD="GET" />
```

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</STEP>

In the example shown above, the RECORD input is used to record another seven second audio sample.

- 5 However, the sample is stored in a file, instead of sent in the HTTP request as it was in the previous example. The name of the file is chosen by the voice browser automatically and is stored in a variable named "theName". After storing the audio sample in the file, 10 the voice browser will continue execution at the URL specified by the NEXT attribute. In contrast to the previous example, the value of the variable "theName" will be the name of the audio file. In the earlier example (where the audio sample was transmitted via the 15 HTTP request), the value of the variable "theName" would be null.

The TIME input type of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="TIME" NAME="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"] />) 20 is used to collect a time of day from the user. The TIME input includes a NAME attribute, a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step 25 address (i.e., a URL). The value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a number represented in milliseconds.

The TIME input makes use of an input grammar to 30 interpret the user's response and to store that response in a standard format. This grammar will interpret responses of various forms, including both 12-hour and 24-hour conventions. "Four oh three PM" becomes "403P". Note that "P" is appended to the time. Likewise, "Ten 35 fifteen in the morning" becomes "1015A". "Noon" is

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stored as "1200P", and "Midnight" is stored as "1200A". Military time, such as, "Thirteen hundred hours" becomes "100P". If the user does not specify the morning or evening, no indication is stored in the variable  
5 (i.e., "Four o'clock" is stored as "400").

The following example illustrates the TIME input in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="init">
  <PROMPT> What time would you like your wakeup
  10    call? </PROMPT>
  <INPUT TYPE="time" NAME="wakeup"
NEXT="#record"/>
</STEP>
```

15 In the example shown above, the TIME input is used to collect a time of day from the user, store that data in the variable named "wakeup", and then go to the STEP element named "record".

20 The YORN input of the INPUT attribute of the markup language (i.e., <INPUT TYPE="YORN" NAME="value"  
[TIMEOUT="value"] NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] />,  
or <INPUT TYPE="YORN" [NAME="value"] [TIMEOUT="value"]  
[NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] > CASE elements  
</INPUT>) is used to collect "yes" or "no" responses  
25 from the user. The YORN input includes a NAME attribute,  
a NEXT attribute, a NEXTMETHOD attribute, and a  
TIMEOUT attribute. The value of the NAME attribute  
can be an identifier, and the value of the NEXT  
attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL). The  
30 value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a  
post, and the value of the TIMEOUT attribute can be a  
number represented in milliseconds.

35 The YORN input maps a variety of affirmative and negative responses to the values "Y" and "N". The YORN input stores the value "Y" for affirmative responses and the value "N" for negative responses. Affirmative and

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negative responses are determined using an input grammar that maps various user responses to the appropriate result.

The following example illustrates the use of the  
5 YORN input in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="ask">
  <PROMPT> Fire the missles now? </PROMPT>
  <INPUT TYPE="YORN" NAME="fire"
    NEXT="#confirm"/>
10  </STEP>
```

In the example shown above, the YORN input is used to collect a "yes" or "no" response from the user, store that response into a variable named "fire", and then go  
15 to the STEP named "confirm".

The OPTION element of the markup language (i.e.  
<OPTION [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ]  
[VALUE="value"] > text </OPTION>) is used to define the type of response expected from the user in a STEP  
20 element or state. The OPTION input includes a VALUE attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the VALUE attribute can be a literal value, the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD  
25 attribute can be a get and a post. The OPTION element can exist within the INPUT element, and then only when using the OPTIONLIST input.

The following two examples illustrate the use of the OPTION element in a markup language document.

```
30  <INPUT NAME="choice" TYPE="optionlist">
    <OPTION NEXT="#doit" VALUE="1"> one </OPTION>
    <OPTION NEXT="#doit" VALUE="2"> two </OPTION>
  </INPUT>
```

35 The example shown above illustrates the use of the OPTION element within the INPUT element. In this example, the first OPTION element would be executed when

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the user responded with "one", and the second OPTION would be executed when the user responded with "two". If the user said "one", the value of the variable named "choice" would be "1", because of the use of the VALUE attribute. Because the NEXT attributes for both of the OPTION element in this OPTIONLIST element are the same, the voice browser would proceed to the STEP element named "doit" when either "one" or "two" was recognized.

10       <INPUT TUPE="optionlist">  
          <OPTION  
            NEXT="http://localhost/vml/weather.asp">  
            weather </OPTION>  
          <OPTION NEXT="http://localhost/vml/news.asp">  
            news </OPTION>  
15        <OPTION  
            NEXT="http://localhost/vml/traffic.asp">  
            traffic </OPTION>  
      </INPUT>

20       The example shown above illustrates the use of the OPTION element to select one of three applications. Note that the URLs used in the NEXT attributes are full HTTP URLs, and that unlike the previous example, each OPTION element has a unique NEXT attribute.

25       The OPTIONS element of the markup language (i.e., <OPTIONS/>) describes the type of input expected within a given STEP element. The OPTIONS element can be used in HELP elements to present the user with a complete list of valid responses. The OPTIONS element can be used 30 anywhere that text is read to the user. The OPTIONS element can be contained by a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, or ACK element.

The following example illustrates the use of the OPTIONS element in a markup language document.

35       <CLASS NAME="helpful">  
          <HELP> Your choices are: <OPTIONS/> </HELP>  
      </CLASS>

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The example shown above illustrates how the OPTIONS element can be used to construct a "helpful" class. Any STEP elements that directly or indirectly name "helpful" as a PARENT element respond to a helpful request (i.e., 5 "help") by speaking the message, in which the OPTIONS element expands to a description of what can be said by the user at this point in the dialog.

The ACK element of the markup language (i.e., <ACK [CONFIRM="value"] [BACKGROUND="value"] 10 [REPROMPT="value"] > text </ACK>) is used to acknowledge the transition between Step elements, usually as a result of a user response. The ACK element includes a CONFIRM attribute, a BACKGROUND attribute, and a REPROMPT attribute. The value of the BACKGROUND and 15 REPROMPT attributes can be a "Y" and "N", and the CONFIRM attribute can be a YORN element as described above. The ACK element can be contained within a STEP element or a CLASS element as further described below.

The following is an example of a markup language 20 document containing the Ack element.

```
<STEP NAME="card_type">
  <PROMPT>
    What type of credit card do you have?
  </PROMPT>
  25  <INPUT NAME="type" TYPE="optionlist">
    <OPTION NEXT="#exp"> visa </OPTION>
    <OPTION NEXT="#exp"> mastercard
  </OPTION>
  30  <OPTION NEXT="#exp"> discover </OPTION>
  </INPUT>
  <ACK CONFIRM="YORN" REPROMPT="Y">
    I thought you said <VALUE NAME="type"/>
    <BREAK/> Is that correct?
  </ACK>
  35  </STEP>
```

In the example above, the ACK element is used to confirm the user's choice of credit card. When this element is interpreted by the voice browser, the PROMPT

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element is read to the user using text-to-speech unit 252. The system waits until the user responds with "visa", "mastercard", or "discover" and then asks the user to confirm that the type of card was recognized 5 correctly. If the user answers "yes" to the ACK element, the voice browser will proceed to the STEP element named "exp". If the user answers "no" to the ACK element, the text of the PROMPT element will be read again, and the user will be allowed to make his or her 10 choice again. The voice browser then re-enters or executes the STEP element again.

The AUDIO element of the markup language (i.e., <AUDIO SRC="value" />) specifies an audio file that should be played. The AUDIO element includes a SRC 15 attribute. The value of the SRC attribute can be an audio file URL. The AUDIO element can be contained within a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, or ACK element.

The following markup language contains the AUDIO 20 element.

```
<PROMPT>
    At the tone, the time will be 11:59 p m
    <AUDIO
SRC="http://localhost/sounds/beep.wav"/>
</PROMPT>
```

In the example above, the AUDIO element is included 30 in a PROMPT element. When interpreted by the voice browser, a prompt (i.e., "At the tone, the time will be 11:59 pm.") will be played to the user, and the WAV file "beep.wav" will be played to the user as specified by the AUDIO element.

The BREAK element of the markup language (i.e., <BREAK [MSECS="value" | SIZE="value"] />) is used to 35 insert a pause into content or information to be played to the user. The BREAK element includes a MSEC

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attribute and a SIZE attribute. The value of the MSEC attribute can include a number represented in milliseconds, and the value of the SIZE attribute can be none, small, medium, and large.

5       The BREAK element can be used when text or audio sample is to be played to the user. The BREAK element can be contained within a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, or ACK element. The following markup language contains the BREAK element.

10      <PROMPT>  
                Welcome to Earth. <BREAK MSECS="250"/>  
                How may I help you?  
    </PROMPT>

15      In the example above, the BREAK element is used with a MSECS attribute, inside a PROMPT element. When interpreted by the voice browser, a prompt (i.e., "Welcome to Earth.") is read to the user. The system will then pause for 250 milliseconds, and play "How may  
20     I help you?".

Alternatively, the SIZE attribute (i.e., "small", "medium", and "large" ) of the BREAK element can be used to control the duration of the pause instead of specifying the number of milliseconds as shown below.

25      <PROMPT>  
                Welcome to Earth. <BREAK SIZE="medium"/>  
                How may I help you?  
    </PROMPT>

30      The OR element of the markup language (i.e., <OR/>) is used to define alternate recognition results in an OPTION element. The OR element is interpreted as a logical OR, and is used to associate multiple recognition results with a single NEXT attribute.

35      The following example illustrates the use of the OR element in a markup language document.

<INPUT TYPE="optionlist">

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```
5      <OPTION NEXT="#coke_chosen">
          coke <OR/> coca-cola
        </OPTION>
      <OPTION NEXT="#pepsi_chosen"> pepsi </OPTION>
    </INPUT>
```

The example shown above illustrates the use of the OR element within an OPTION element. As shown above, the user may respond with either "coke" or "coca-cola",  
10 and the voice browser will proceed to the STEP named "coke\_chosen".

The CANCEL element of the markup language (i.e., <CANCEL NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] /> or <CANCEL NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"]> text </CANCEL>) is  
15 used to define the behavior of the application in response to a user's request to cancel the current PROMPT element. The CANCEL element includes a NEXT attribute and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL),  
20 and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post.

The CANCEL element can be invoked through a variety of phrases. For example, the user may say only the word "cancel", or the user may say "I would like to cancel,  
25 please." The CANCEL element can be contained within a STEP element or a CLASS element. When the voice browser detects "cancel" from the user, the voice browser responds based upon the use of the CANCEL element in markup language document. If no CANCEL element is  
30 associated with a given STEP element, the current prompt will be interrupted (if it is playing) and will stay in the same application state and then process any interactive inputs.

The following example illustrates a markup language containing the CANCEL element.  
35

```
<STEP NAME="report">
<CANCEL NEXT="#traffic_menu"/>
```

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```
    <PROMPT> Traffic conditions for Chicago,  
    Illinois,  
    Monday, May 18. Heavy  
    congestion on ... </PROMPT>  
5     INPUT TYPE="optionlist">  
        <OPTION NEXT="#report"> repeat </OPTION>  
        <OPTION NEXT="#choose"> new city  
    </OPTION>  
    </INPUT>  
10    </STEP>
```

The example above illustrates the use of the CANCEL element to specify that when the user says "cancel", the voice browser proceeds to the STEP element named "traffic\_menu", instead of the default behavior, which would be to stop the PROMPT element from playing and wait for a user response. The user can also interrupt the PROMPT element by speaking a valid OPTION element. In this example, the user could interrupt the PROMPT element and get the traffic conditions for a different city by saying "new city".

The CASE element of the markup language (i.e., <CASE VALUE="value" NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] />) is used to define the flow of control of the application, based on the values of internal markup language variables. The CASE input includes a VALUE attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the VALUE attribute can be a literal value, the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e. a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post. The CASE element can be contained by a SWITCH element or an INPUT element, when using an input type of the INPUT element that collects a single value (i.e., DATE, DIGITS, MONEY, PHONE, TIME, YORN).

The following example illustrates a markup language containing a CASE element.

```
<SWITCH FILED = "pizza">
```

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```
<CASE VALUE="pepperoni" NEXT="#p_pizza"/>
<CASE VALUE="sausage" NEXT="#s_pizza"/>
<CASE VALUE="veggie" NEXT="#v_pizza"/>
</SWITCH>
```

5

In the example above, the markup language shows the use of the CASE element within the SWITCH element. In this example, the CASE elements are used to direct the voice browser to different URLs based on the value of 10 the markup language variable "pizza".

The CLASS element of the markup language (i.e., <CLASS NAME="value" [PARENT="value"] [BARGEIN="value"] [COST="value"]> text </CLASS>) is used to define a set of elements that are to be reused within the content of 15 a dialog. For example, application developers can define a set of elements once, and then use them several times. The CLASS input includes a NAME attribute, a PARENT attribute, a BARGEIN attribute, and a COST attribute. The value of the NAME and the PARENT 20 attribute can be an identifier. The value of the BARGEIN attribute can be "Y" and "N", and the value of the COST attribute can be an integer number.

The CLASS element can be used to define the default behavior of an ERROR element, a HELP element, and a 25 CANCEL element, within a given DIALOG element. The CLASS element can be contained by a DIALOG element. The following example shows a markup language document containing the CLASS element.

```
<CLASS NAME="simple">
    <HELP> Your choices are <OPTIONS/> </HELP>
    <ERROR> I did not understand what you said.
            Valid responses are <OPTIONS/> </ERROR>
</CLASS>

35   <STEP NAME="beverage" PARENT="simple">
        <PROMPT> Please choose a drink. </PROMPT>
        <INPUT NAME="drink" TYPE="optionlist">
            <OPTION NEXT="#food"> coke </OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#food"> pepsi </OPTION>
```

35

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```
</INPUT>
</STEP>

5      <STEP NAME="food" PARENT="simple">
        <PROMPT> Please choose a meal. </PROMPT>
        <INPUT NAME="meal" TYPE="optionlist">
        <OPTION NEXT="#deliver"> pizza </OPTION>
        <OPTION NEXT="#deliver"> tacos </OPTION>
    </INPUT>
10     </STEP>
```

In the example above, the markup language document illustrates the use of the CLASS element to define a HELP element and an ERROR element that will be used in several steps within this DIALOG element. The markup language also illustrates the use of the PARENT attribute in the STEP element to refer to the CLASS element, and therefore inherit the behaviors defined within it. When interpreted by the voice browser, the STEP element will behave as if the HELP and ERROR elements that are defined in the CLASS element were defined explicitly in the steps themselves

The EMP element of the markup language (i.e., <EMP [LEVEL="value"]> text </EMP>) is used to identify content within text that will be read to the user where emphasis is to be applied. The EMP element includes a LEVEL attribute. The value of the LEVEL element can be none, reduced, moderate, and strong. The EMP element can be contained within a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, or ACK element. The following example of a markup language document contains the EMP element.

```
<PROMPT>
    This example is
    <EMP LEVEL="strong"> really </EMP>
    simple.
</PROMPT>
```

In the above example, the EMP element is used to apply "strong" emphasis to the word "really" in the PROMPT element. The actual effect on the speech output

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is determined by the text-to-speech (TTS) software of the system. To achieve a specific emphatic effect, the PROS element, as further described below, can be used instead of the EMP element.

5       The ERROR element of the markup language (i.e.,  
<ERROR [TYPE="value"] [ORDINAL="value"]  
[REPROMPT="value"] [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ]  
> text </ERROR>) is used to define the behavior of the application in response to an error. The ERROR element  
10 includes a TYPE attribute, an ORDINAL attribute, a REPROMPT attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the TYPE attribute can be all, nomatch, nospeech, toolittle, toomuch, noauth, and badnext. The value of the ORDINAL attribute can be an  
15 integer number, the value of the REPROMPT attribute can be "Y" or "N", the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post.

If the application developer does not define the  
20 behavior of an ERROR element for a given STEP element, the default behavior will be used. The default behavior for the ERROR element is to play the phrase "An error has occurred.", remain in the current STEP element, replay the PROMPT element, and wait for the user to  
25 respond. The ERROR element can be contained within a STEP or a CLASS element.

The following example illustrates the use of the ERROR element in a markup language document.

```
1       <STEP NAME="errors">  
2        <ERROR TYPE="nomatch"> First error message.  
3           I did not understand what you said.  
4        <ERROR TYPE="nomatch" ORDINAL="2">  
5           Second error message.  
6           I did not understand what you said.  
7        <PROMPT> This step tests error messages.
```

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```
8      Say 'oops' twice. Then say 'done' to
9      choose another test. </PROMPT>
10     <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
11       <OPTION NEXT="#end"> done </OPTION>
5      12   </INPUT>
13   </STEP>
```

In the example above, the ERROR element is used to define the application's behavior in response to an error. On line 2, the error message is defined to be used the first time an error of type "nomatch" occurs in this STEP element. On line 4, the error message is to be used the second and all subsequent times an error of type "nomatch" occurs in this STEP.

15 The ORDINAL attribute of the ERROR element of the markup language determines which message will be used in the case of repeated errors within the same STEP element. The voice browser can choose an error message based on the following algorithm. If the error has occurred three times, the voice browser will look for an ERROR element with an ORDINAL attribute of "3". If no such ERROR element has been defined, the voice browser will look for an ERROR element with an ORDINAL attribute of "2", and then "1", and then an ERROR element with no 20 ORDINAL attribute defined. Thus, if the ERROR element is defined with the ORDINAL attribute of "6" in the STEP element shown above, and the same error occurred six times in a row, the user would hear the first error message one time, then the second error message four 25 times, and finally the error message with ORDINAL attribute of "6".

The HELP element of the markup language (i.e.,<HELP [ORDINAL="value"] [REPROMPT="value"] [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] > text </HELP>) is used to define 35 the behavior of the application when the user asks for help. The HELP element includes an ORDINAL attribute, a

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REPROMPT attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD attribute. The value of the ORDINAL attribute can be an integer number, and the value of the REPROMPT attribute can be a "Y" and "N". The value of the NEXT attribute 5 can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post.

The HELP element, like CANCEL the element, can be detected through a variety of phrases. The user may say only the word "help", or the user may say "I would like 10 help, please." In either case, the HELP element will be interpreted. The HELP element can be contained within a STEP element or a CLASS element.

When the voice browser detects "help" from the user, the voice browser responds based upon the use of 15 the HELP element in markup language document. If no HELP element is associated with a given STEP, the current prompt will be interrupted (if it is playing), the user will hear "No help is available.", and will stay in the same application state and process any 20 interactive inputs.

The following example illustrates the use of the HELP element in a markup language document.

```
1 <STEP NAME="helps">
2   <HELP REPROMPT="Y"> First help message.
25   3   You should hear the prompt again. </HELP>
4   <HELP ORDINAL="2"> Second help message.
5   5   You should not hear the prompt now.
</HELP>
6   6   <PROMPT> This step tests help prompts.
30   7   Say 'help' twice. Then say 'done' to
8   choose another test. </PROMPT>
9   <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
10   10   <OPTION NEXT="#end"> done </OPTION>
11   11   </INPUT>
35   12 </STEP>
```

In the example above, the HELP element is used to define the application's behavior in response to the user input "help". On line 2, the help message is

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defined to be used the first time the user says "help". On line 4, the help message is defined to be used the second and all subsequent times the user says "help". It should also be noted that through the use of the 5 REPROMPT attribute, the prompt will be repeated after the first help message, but it will not be repeated after the second help message.

The ORDINAL attribute of the HELP element of the markup language determines which message will be used in 10 the case of repeated utterances of "help" within the same STEP element. The voice browser will choose a help message based on the following algorithm. If the user has said "help" three times, the voice browser will look for a HELP element with an ORDINAL attribute of "3". 15 If no such HELP element has been defined, the voice browser will look for a HELP element with an ORDINAL attribute of "2", and then "1", and then a HELP element with no ORDINAL attribute defined. Thus, if a HELP element is defined with ORDINAL attribute of "6" in the 20 STEP element shown above, and the user said "help" six times in a row, the user would hear the first help message one time, then the second help message four times, and finally the help message with ORDINAL attribute of "6".  
25 The PROS element of the markup language (i.e., <PROS [RATE="value"] [VOL="value"] [PITCH="value"] [RANGE="value"] > text </PROS>) is used to control the prosody of the content presented to the user via PROMPT, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, and ACK elements. Prosody affects 30 certain qualities of the text-to-speech presentation, including rate of speech, pitch, range, and volume. The PROS element includes a RATE attribute, a VOL attribute, a PITCH attribute, and a RANGE attribute. The value of the RATE attribute can be an integer number representing

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words per minute, and the value of the VOL attribute can be an integer number representing volume of speech. The value of the PITCH attribute can be an integer number representing pitch in hertz, and the value of the RANGE 5 attribute can be an integer number representing range in hertz. The PROS element can be contained within a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, or ACK element.

The following example illustrates the use of the pros element.

10       <PROS VOL="0.5"> I ate the apple. </PROS>  
          </PROMPT>

15       In the example shown above, the phrase "I ate the apple" is spoken with one half of the normal volume.

16       The RENAME element of the markup language (i.e., <RENAME RECNAME="value" VARNAME="value" />) is used to 20 rename recognition slots in grammars, such that the resulting variable name can be different from the name 25 of the recognition slot defined in the grammar. The rename element includes a VARNAME attribute and a RECNAME attribute. The value of the VARNAME and the RECNAME attributes can be identifiers. The RENAME element can exist only within the INPUT element, and then only when using the GRAMMAR input type.

The following example illustrates the use of the RENAME element in a markup language document.

20       <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"  
          SRC="http://www.foo.com/mygram.grm"  
          NEXT="http://www.fancyquotes.com/vmlstocks.asp">  
          <RENAME VARNAME="sym" RECNAME="symbol">  
          <RENAME VARNAME="detail" RECNAME="quotetype">  
          </INPUT>

35

In the example shown above, the RENAME element is used to account for differences in the variable names collected from a grammar and those expected by another

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script. In particular, a grammar from foo.com is used to provide input to an application hosted by fancyquotes.com. Because, in this example, the grammar and script have been developed independently, the RENAME 5 element is used to help connect the grammar and the stock-quoting application.

The RESPONSE element of the markup language (i.e., <RESPONSE FIELDS="value" [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] /> or <RESPONSE FIELDS="value" 10 [NEXT="value" [NEXTMETHOD="value"] ] > SWITCH elements </RESPONSE>) is used to define the behavior of an application in response to different combinations of recognition slots. The response element includes a FIELDS attribute, a NEXT attribute, and a NEXTMETHOD 15 attribute. The value of the FIELDS attribute can be a list of identifiers, the value of the NEXT attribute can be a next step address (i.e., a URL), and the value of the NEXTMETHOD attribute can be a get and a post.

The RESPONSE element enables application developers 20 to define a different NEXT attribute depending on which of the grammar's slots were filled. The RESPONSE element can exist within an INPUT element, and then only when using an input type of grammar.

The following example illustrates the RESPONSE 25 element in a markup language document.

```
<INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"

SRC="gram://.Banking/action/amt/fromacct/toacct"
      NEXT="#notenoughfields">
      30      <RESPONSE FIELDS="action,amt,fromacct,toacct"
              NEXT="#doit"/>
      <RESPONSE FIELDS="action,amt,fromacct"
              NEXT="#asktoacct"/>
      <RESPONSE FIELDS="action,amt,toacct"
              NEXT="#askfromacct"/>
      <RESPONSE FIELDS="action,amt"
      35      NEXT="#askaccts"/>
              <RESPONSE FIELDS="action"
              NEXT="#askamtaccts"/>
```

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</INPUT>

The example shown above illustrates the use of the RESPONSE element where the user specifies less than all  
5 the possible variables available in the grammar. Using the RESPONSE element, the application can arrange to collect the information not already filled in by prior steps. In particular, this example transfers to the "askaccts" STEP element if neither the source nor  
10 destination account is specified (i.e., the user said "transfer 500 dollars"), but it transfers to the "askfromacct" STEP element if the user said what account to transfer to, but did not specify a source account (i.e., if the user had said "transfer 100 dollars to  
15 savings"). The next URL of the INPUT element is used when the user's response does not match any of the defined responses.

The SWITCH element of the markup language (i.e., <SWITCH FIELD="value"> vml </SWITCH>) is used to define  
20 the application behavior dependant on the value of a specified recognition slot. The switch element includes a FIELD attribute. The value of the FIELD attribute can be an identifier. The SWITCH element is used in conjunction with the CASE element. The SWITCH element  
25 can exist within the INPUT element, and then only when using the grammar input type.

The following example illustrates the use of the SWITCH element in a markup language document.

30 <INPUT TYPE="GRAMMAR"  
SRC="gram://.Banking/action/amount/fromacct/toacct">  
35 <SWITCH FIELD="action">  
<CASE VALUE="transfer" NEXT="#transfer" />  
<CASE VALUE="balance" NEXT="#balance" />  
<CASE VALUE="activity">  
<SWITCH FIELD="fromacct">  
<CASE VALUE="checking" NEXT="#chxact" />  
<CASE VALUE="savings" NEXT="#savact" />

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```
</SWITCH>
</CASE>
</SWITCH>
</INPUT>
```

5

In the example shown above, the SWITCH element is used to determine the next STEP element to execute in response to a banking request. In this example, the grammar may fill in some or all of the variables (i.e., "action", "amount", "fromacct", and "toacct"). If the user asks for a transfer or balance action, the next STEP element to execute is the transfer or balance step. If the user asks for a report of account activity, a second SWITCH element determines the next STEP element based on the account type for which a report is being requested (assumed to be available in the "fromacct" variable).

The VALUE element of the markup language (i.e., <VALUE NAME="value" />) is used to present the value of a variable to the user via the text-to-speech unit. The VALUE element includes a FIELD attribute. The value of the FIELD attribute can be an identifier. The VALUE element can be used anywhere that text is read to the user. The VALUE element can be contained by a PROMPT, EMP, PROS, HELP, ERROR, CANCEL, or ACK element.

The following example illustrates the use of the value element in a markup language document.

```
<STEP NAME="thanks">
    <PROMPT> Thanks for your responses. I'll
30 record
        that <VALUE NAME="first"/> is your
        favorite
        and that <VALUE NAME="second"/> is your
        second choice.
35 </PROMPT>
    <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="/recordresults.asp"
/>
</STEP>
```

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The example shown above illustrates the use of the VALUE element to read the user's selections back to the user. As shown above, the value of the variable named "first" would be inserted into the PROMPT element, and  
5 the value of the variable named "second" would be inserted into the PROMPT element.

The COST attribute of the STEP element of the markup language enables is used to charge a user for various services. The COST attribute can be used in the  
10 definition of one or more STEP or CLASS elements. The value of the COST attribute is the integer number of credits the user is to be charged for viewing the content. For example, to charge 10 credits for listening to a particular step element a provider might  
15 write the following markup language:

```
<STEP NAME="premiumContent" COST="10">
... premium content goes here ...
</STEP>
```

20 If a content provider wishes to maintain a record of subscriber charges, the content provider need only request identifying data for the user using the PROFILE input type as in:

```
25 <INPUT TYPE="PROFILE" PROFNAME="UID"
      NAME="subID" />
```

Using the resulting value and examining the SUB\_CHARGE query-string parameter at each page request, the content provider can maintain records on a per-  
30 subscriber basis.

The following text describes a weather application 500 that can be executed by the system 200 of FIG. 3. FIG. 8 shows an exemplary state diagram of the weather application containing states that prompt the user for  
35 input in order to access the weather database. After speaking the current or forecast weather information, the application expects the user to say a city name or

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the word "exit" to return to the main welcome prompt. The user can select to hear the forecast after the current weather conditions prompt. It will be recognized that the application could be designed to  
5 address errors, help and cancel requests properly.

The markup language set forth below is a static version of the weather application. The initial state or welcome prompt is within the first step, init (lines 11-20). The user can respond with a choice of  
10 "weather", "market", "news" or "exit". Once the application detects the user's response of "weather", the next step, weather (lines 21-29), begins. The prompt queries the user for a city name. Valid choices are "London", "New York", and "Chicago".

15 The steps called london\_current, london\_forecast, newyork\_current, newyork\_forecast, chicago\_current, and chicago\_forecast provide weather information prompts for each city. It is noted that Market and news steps are just placeholders in the example (lines 111 and 115).

```
20      <?XML VERSION="1.0"?>
<!--
____-->
25  -->      <!-- (c) 1998 Motorola Inc.
-->
      <!-- weather.vml
-->
      <!--
____-->
30  <DIALOG>
      <CLASS NAME="help_top">
          <HELP>You are at the top level menu. For
weather information,
35      say weather. </HELP>
      </CLASS>
      <STEP NAME="init" PARENT="help_top">
          <PROMPT>Welcome to Genie.<BREAK SIZE="large"/>
          How may I help you? </PROMPT>
40      <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
          <OPTION NEXT="#weather">weather</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#market">market</OPTION>
```

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```
        <OPTION NEXT="#news">news</OPTION>
        <OPTION NEXT="#bye">exit</OPTION>
    </INPUT>
</STEP>
5    <STEP NAME="weather" PARENT="help_top">
        <PROMPT>What city? </PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
            <OPTION
NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
10     <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
            <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_current">chicago</OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
15     </INPUT>
</STEP>
<CLASS NAME="help_generic">
    <HELP>Your choices are <OPTIONS/>. </HELP>
</CLASS>
20    <STEP NAME="london_current" PARENT="help_generic">
        <PROMPT>It is currently 46 degrees in London,
with rain.
        <BREAK SIZE="large"/>
        To hear the 3 day forecast for London, say
25    forecast, or say
            another city name, such as Chicago or New
York.</PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
            <OPTION
30    NEXT="#london_forecast">forecast</OPTION>
            <OPTION
NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
35     <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_current">chicago</OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
        </INPUT>
</STEP>
40    <STEP NAME="london_forecast" PARENT="help_generic">
        <PROMPT>London forecast for
Tuesday. Showers. High of 50. Low of 44.
Wednesday. Partly cloudy. High of 39. Low of
35.
45     <BREAK SIZE="large"/>
        Choose a city, or say exit to return to the
main menu.</PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
            <OPTION
50    NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
```

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```
        <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
        <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_current">chicago</OPTION>
5          <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
        </INPUT>
</STEP>
<STEP NAME="chicago_current" PARENT="help_generic">
    <PROMPT>It is currently 31 degrees in Chicago,
10   with snow.
        <BREAK SIZE="large"/>
        To hear the 3 day forecast for Chicago, say
forecast, or say
another city name, such as London or New
15 York.</PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
            <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_forecast">forecast</OPTION>
            <OPTION
20   NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
            <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_current">chicago</OPTION>
25          <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
            </INPUT>
</STEP>
<STEP NAME="chicago_forecast"
PARENT="help_generic">
30          <PROMPT>Chicago forecast for
Tuesday. Flurries. High of 27. Low of 22.
Wednesday. Snow showers. High of 27. Low of
12.
        <BREAK SIZE="large"/>
35   Choose a city, or say exit to return to the
main menu.</PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
            <OPTION
NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
40          <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
            <OPTION
NEXT="#chicago_current">chicago</OPTION>
            <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
45          </INPUT>
</STEP>
<STEP NAME="newyork_current" PARENT="help_generic">
    <PROMPT>It is currently 39 degrees in New York
City, with
50          cloudy skies.<BREAK SIZE="large"/>
```

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```

        To hear the 3 day forecast for New York, say
forecast, or say
another city name, such as London or New
York.</PROMPT>
5      <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
          <OPTION
NEXT="#newyork_forecast">forecast</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#london_">london</OPTION>
10     <OPTION NEXT="#newyork">new york</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#chicago">chicago</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
      </INPUT>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="newyork_forecast"
15   PARENT="help_generic">
        <PROMPT>New York City forecast for
Tuesday. Windy. High of 48. Low of 43.
Wednesday. Rain. High of 43. Low of 28.
        <BREAK SIZE="large"/>
20   Choose a city, or say exit to return to the main
menu.</PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
          <OPTION
NEXT="#london_current">london</OPTION>
25     <OPTION NEXT="#newyork_current">new
york</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#chicago.">chicago</OPTION>
          <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
      </INPUT>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="market">
        <PROMPT>Market update is currently not
supported. </PROMPT>
30      <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#init"/>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="news">
        <PROMPT>News update is currently not
supported. </PROMPT>
35      <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#init"/>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="bye" PARENT="help_top">
        <PROMPT>Thanks for using Genie. Goodbye.
40   </PROMPT>
        <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#exit"/>
    </STEP>
</DIALOG>

```

FIG. 9 illustrates the same state diagram for the weather application as shown in FIG. 8 with labels for  
50 each dialog boundary. The initial dialog and dialog1

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contains the user prompts for welcome and city name. The Dialog1 also controls the prompts for transitioning to hear a city's current or forecast weather and returning to the main menu. Dialog2 handles access of 5 the weather database for the current conditions of the city specified by the user and the information is read to the user. The Dialog2 then returns control to dialog1 again to get the user's next request. Similarly, dialog3 handles access of the weather 10 database for the forecast of the city requested and speaks the information. It returns control to dialog1 to get the next user input.

The markup language set forth below illustrates an example of the weather application corresponding to the 15 dialog boundaries as presented in the state diagram of FIG. 9. The implementation of the application is with Active Server Pages using VBscript. It consists of three files called dialog1.asp, dialog2.asp, and dialog3.asp, each corresponding to the appropriate 20 dialog.

For dialog1, there are two help message types, help\_top and help\_dialog1 (lines 16 and 29). The first step, init, is at line 19. The weather step follows at line 32. Valid city names are those from the citylist 25 table (line 36) of the weather database. Lines 7 and 8 accomplish the database connection via ADO. Line 38 is the start of a loop for creating an option list of all possible city responses. If the user chooses a city, control goes to the step getcurrentweather in dialog2, 30 as shown at line 40. In this case, the city name is also passed to dialog2 via the variable CITY at line 34. The last major step in dialog1 is nextcommand and can be referenced by dialog2 or dialog3. It prompts the user for a cityname or the word forecast. Similar to the

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weather step, nextcommand uses a loop to create the optionlist (line 53). If the user responds with a city name, the step getcurrentweather in dialog2 is called. If the user responds with the word forecast, step  
5 getforecastweather is called instead.

Dialog2 contains a single step getcurrentweather. The step first reads the city name into local variable strCity (line 95). A database query tries to find a match in the weather database for the city (lines 97 and  
10 98). If there is no weather information found for the city, the application will speak a message (line 101) and proceed to init step in dialog1 (line 110). Otherwise, the application will speak the current weather information for the city (line 105) and switch  
15 to the nextcommand step in dialog1 (line 112).

Dialog3 is similar to dialog2. It contains a single step getforecastweather. The database query is identical to the one in dialog2. If there is weather information available for the city, the application will  
20 speak the weather forecast (line 105), otherwise a notification message is spoken (line 101). Dialog3 relinquishes control back to dialog1 with either the init step (line 110) or next command (line 112).

25       <%@ LANGUAGE="VBSCRIPT" %>  
      <%  
          Option Explicit  
          Private objConnection, rsCities  
          Private strCity, SQLQuery  
          ' Create and open a connection to the database.  
          Set objConnection =  
          Server.CreateObject("ADODB.Connection")  
          objConnection.Open "Weather Database"  
      %>  
30        <?XML VERSION="1.0"?>  
      <!--  
  
      --->

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```
<!-- (c) 1998 Motorola Inc.  
-->  
<!-- dialog1.asp  
-->  
5 <!--  
  
--->  
_____  
<DIALOG>  
<CLASS NAME="help_top">  
10 <HELP>You are at the top level menu. For  
weather information,  
say weather. </HELP>  
</CLASS>  
<STEP NAME="init" PARENT="help_top">  
15 <PROMPT>Welcome to Genie.<BREAK SIZE="large"/>  
How may I help you? </PROMPT>  
<INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">  
20 <OPTION NEXT="#weather">weather</OPTION>  
<OPTION NEXT="#market">market</OPTION>  
<OPTION NEXT="#news">news</OPTION>  
<OPTION NEXT="#bye">exit</OPTION>  
</INPUT>  
</STEP>  
<CLASS NAME="help_dialog1">  
25 <HELP>Your choices are <OPTIONS/>. </HELP>  
</CLASS>  
<STEP NAME="weather" PARENT="help_dialog1">  
<PROMPT>What city? </PROMPT>  
30 <INPUT TYPE="optionlist" NAME="CITY">  
    <% ' Get all city names. %>  
    <% SQLQuery = "SELECT * FROM CityList" %>  
    <% Set rsCities =  
objConnection.Execute(SQLQuery) %>  
        <% Do Until rsCities.EOF %>  
            <% ' Create an OPTION element for each  
city. %>  
                <OPTION  
NEXT="dialog2.asp#getcurrentweather"  
40              VALUE="<% rsCities("City") %>">  
            <%= rsCities("City") %></OPTION>  
            <% rsCities.MoveNext %>  
            <% Loop %>  
                <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>  
            </INPUT>  
45 </STEP>  
<STEP NAME="nextcommand" PARENT="help_dialog1">  
    <% strCity = Request.QueryString("CITY") %>  
    <PROMPT> To hear the 3 day forecast for  
50 <%=strCity%>, say  
        forecast, or say another city  
name.</PROMPT>
```

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```
<INPUT TYPE="optionlist" NAME="CITY">
    <% ' Get all city names. %>
    <% SQLQuery = "SELECT * FROM CityList" %>
    <% Set rsCities =
5   objConnection.Execute(SQLQuery) %>
        <% Do Until rsCities.EOF %>
            <% ' Create an OPTION element for each
city. %>
                <OPTION
10  NEXT="dialog2.asp#getcurrentweather"
                    VALUE="<% rsCities("City") %>">
                    <% rsCities("City") %></OPTION>
                    <% rsCities.MoveNext %>
                    <% Loop %>
15  <OPTION
NEXT="dialog3.asp#getforecastweather"
                    VALUE="<% strCity
%>">forecast</OPTION>
                    <OPTION NEXT="#init">exit</OPTION>
20  </INPUT>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="market">
        <PROMPT>Market update is currently not
supported. </PROMPT>
25    <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#init"/>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="news">
        <PROMPT>News update is currently not
supported. </PROMPT>
30    <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#init"/>
    </STEP>
    <STEP NAME="bye" PARENT="help_top">
        <PROMPT>Thanks for using Genie. Goodbye.
    </PROMPT>
35    <INPUT TYPE="NONE" NEXT="#exit"/>
    </STEP>
    </DIALOG>
    <!-- _____ End of
40  Dialog1.asp -->
    <%@ LANGUAGE="VBSCRIPT" %>
    <%
        Option Explicit
        Private objConnection, rsWeather, SQLQuery
        Private strCity, Valid
45        ' Create and open a connection to the database.
        Set objConnection =
Server.CreateObject("ADODB.Connection")
        objConnection.Open "Weather Database"
    %>
50    <?XML VERSION="1.0"?>
```

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```
<!--  
-->  
5   --->      <!-- (c) 1998 Motorola Inc.  
--->      <!-- dialog2.asp  
--->      <!--  
  
10  --->  
    <DIALOG>  
    <CLASS NAME="help_dialog2">  
        <HELP>Your choices are <OPTIONS/>. </HELP>  
    </CLASS>  
15   <STEP NAME="getcurrentweather">  
        <% strCity = Request.QueryString("CITY") %>  
        <% Valid = "TRUE" %>  
        <% SQLQuery = "SELECT * FROM WDB WHERE(  
20     City=''" & strCity & "'  
           )" %>  
        <% Set rsWeather =  
        objConnection.Execute(SQLQuery) %>  
        <% If rsWeather.EOF Then %>  
        <% Valid = "FALSE" %>  
25   <%PROMPT> Sorry, <BREAK/> There are no  
current weather  
        conditions available for  
<%=strCity%>. <BREAK/></PROMPT>  
        <% Else %>  
30       <% ' Speak current weather information %>  
        <%PROMPT> <%=rsWeather("Current")%> </PROMPT>  
        <%End If %>  
        <INPUT TYPE = "Hidden" NAME="CITY"  
35     VALUE="<%strCity%>" >  
        </INPUT>  
        <% If ( Valid = "FALSE" ) Then %>  
        <INPUT TYPE="none"  
NEXT="dialog1.asp#init"</INPUT>  
        <% Else %>  
40       <INPUT TYPE="none"  
NEXT="dialog1.asp#nextcommand"></INPUT>  
        <% End If %>  
        </STEP>  
        </DIALOG>  
45       <!-- _____ End of  
Dialog2.asp --->  
        <%@ LANGUAGE="VBSCRIPT" %>  
        <%  
        Option Explicit  
50     Private objConnection, rsWeather, SQLQuery  
        Private strCity, Valid
```

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```
' Create and open a connection to the database.  
Set objConnection =  
Server.CreateObject("ADODB.Connection")  
    objConnection.Open "Weather Database"  
5      %>  
      <?XML VERSION="1.0"?>  
      <!--  
  
-----  
10     -->      <!-- (c) 1998 Motorola Inc.  
-->  
      <!-- dialog3.asp  
-->  
      <!--  
15     -->  
-----  
      <!-->  
      <DIALOG>  
      <CLASS NAME="help_dialog3">  
          <HELP>Your choices are <OPTIONS/>. </HELP>  
20      </CLASS>  
      <STEP NAME="getforecastweather">  
      <% strCity = Request.QueryString("CITY") %>  
      <% Valid = "TRUE" %>  
      <% SQLQuery = "SELECT * FROM WDB WHERE( City=''" &  
25      strCity & "'") %>  
      <% Set rsWeather = objConnection.Execute(SQLQuery)  
%>  
      <% If rsWeather.EOF Then%>  
          <% Valid = "FALSE" %>  
30      <PROMPT> Sorry, <BREAK/> There is no forecast  
weather  
          available for <%=strCity%>. <BREAK/></PROMPT>  
      <% Else %>  
          <% ' Speak forecast weather information %>  
          <PROMPT> <%=rsWeather("Forecast")%> </PROMPT>  
      <% End If %>  
      <INPUT TYPE = "Hidden" NAME="CITY"  
35      VALUE="<%=strCity%>" > </INPUT>  
      <% If ( Valid = "FALSE" ) Then%>  
        <INPUT TYPE="none" NEXT="dialog1.asp#init"></INPUT>  
      <% Else %>  
        <INPUT TYPE="none"  
40      NEXT="dialog1.asp#nextcommand"></INPUT>  
        <% End If %>  
45      </STEP>  
      </DIALOG>  
      <!-- _____ End of  
Dialog3.asp _____ -->
```

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Accordingly, there has been described herein methods and systems to allow users to access information from any location in the world via any suitable network access device. The user can access up-to-date 5 information, such as, news updates, designated city weather, traffic conditions, stock quotes, and stock market indicators. The system also allows the user to perform various transactions (i.e., order flowers, place orders from restaurants, place buy or sell orders for 10 stocks, obtain bank account balances, obtain telephone numbers, receive directions to destinations, etc.)

It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the disclosed embodiment may be modified in numerous ways and may assume many embodiments other than 15 the preferred form specifically set out and described above. Accordingly, it is intended by the appended claims to cover all modifications of the invention which fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A voice browser to process a markup language comprising:
  - a network fetcher unit to retrieve information from a destination of an information source;
  - 10 a parser unit, communicatively coupled to the network fetcher, to parse the retrieved information based upon a predetermined syntax, the parser unit generating a tree structure representing the hierarchy of the retrieved information;
  - 15 an interpreter unit, communicatively coupled to the network fetcher unit, to process the markup language; and
  - a state machine communicatively coupled to the interpreter unit and the parser unit.
2. The voice browser of claim 1, wherein the state machine executes a state sequence based upon the tree structure and an input from a user.
3. The voice browser of claim 1, wherein the state machine maintains the voice browser in a current state based upon the tree structure.
4. A method of generating a grammar for a voice browser comprising the steps of:
  - retrieving a markup language file;
  - 30 parsing the markup language file to determine at least one user input;
  - determining whether the at least one user input corresponds to a predetermined grammar;
  - using the predetermined grammar when the at

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least one user input corresponds to the predetermined grammar;

5 determining a grammar based upon predefined phonetic rules and pronunciation when the at least one user input is not found in the predetermined grammar;

sending the grammar to a speech recognition engine; and

comparing the grammar to a user input.

10

5. A method of processing a markup language comprising the steps of:

fetching the markup language document from an information source;

15 parsing the markup language document to identify elements and attributes of the markup language document;

generating a tree representation to identify the hierarchy of the elements and attributes of the 20 markup language document; and

identifying syntactic information associated with the markup language;

interpreting at least one markup element in the markup language document;

25 prompting the user to enter audio input; and processing the audio input in accordance with the markup language.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising 30 the step of generating a grammar based upon predetermined phonetic rules.

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7. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of comparing the grammar to an electronic representation of the audio input.

5 8. A method of processing a markup language document comprising the steps of:

determining an electronic address for a destination;

10 retrieving the markup language document from the destination;

parsing the markup language document to identify at least one tag in the markup language document;

15 generating a hierarchical tree structure having a plurality of elements;

interpreting the tree structure to identify a first step element;

20 playing an announcement to the user when a prompt element is identified in the tree structure;

collecting input from the user when an input element is identified in the tree structure; and

traversing the tree structure to identify a second step element.

25 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of traversing the tree structure is based upon one of a user input and the markup language document.

30 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the destination is associated with one of a database and an internet server file.

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11. The method of claim 8, wherein the electronic address comprises one of a URL, an email address, a file address, a memory address, a pointer, and a variable.

5

12. A method of browsing an electronic markup language document comprising the steps of:

receiving the markup language document;

identifying one of a plurality of hierarchical

10 elements within the electronic markup language document as an initial element containing an indicated starting point;

extracting at least one attribute of a step element;

15 extracting data from a prompt element;

generating a voice communication to be read to the user based upon the data;

extracting at least one option associated with a user input from an input element; and

20 comparing a grammar to the user input.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of transitioning to a second step based upon one of the user input and an attribute of the input element.

14. A method of processing a markup language document comprising the steps of:

receiving the markup language document from a 30 content provider;

identifying a prompt element having announcement;

transforming the announcement of the prompt element into a phonetic representation of the

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announcement; and  
synthesizing the phonetic representation of  
the announcement to generate an audio output.

- 5        15. A computer comprising:  
            an audio unit to receive an audio input from a  
            user and to provide an audio output to the user;  
            a voice browser, communicatively coupled to  
            the audio unit, to process a markup language  
10      document and to receive the audio input from the  
            user; and  
            a markup language server, communicatively  
            coupled to the audio unit, to store the markup  
            language document and to provide the markup  
15      language document to the voice browser.

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FIG. 1

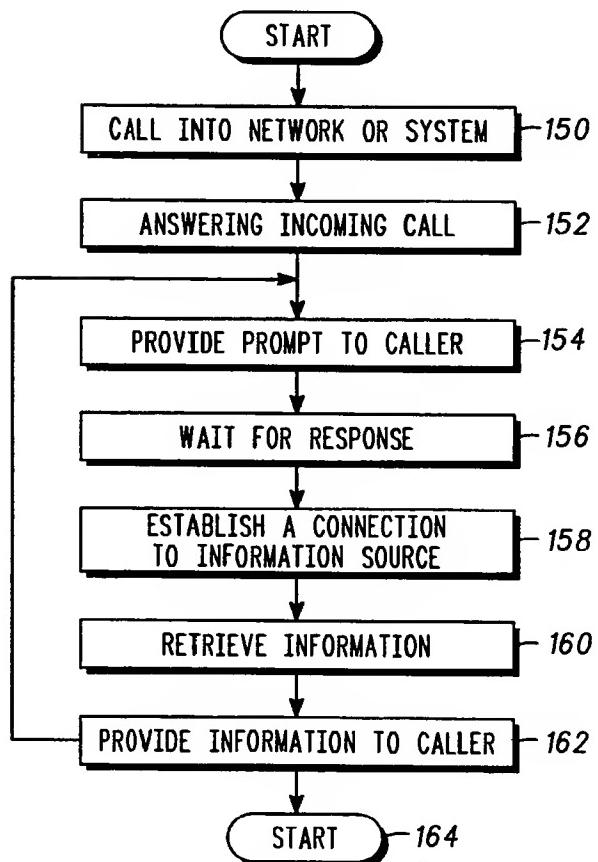
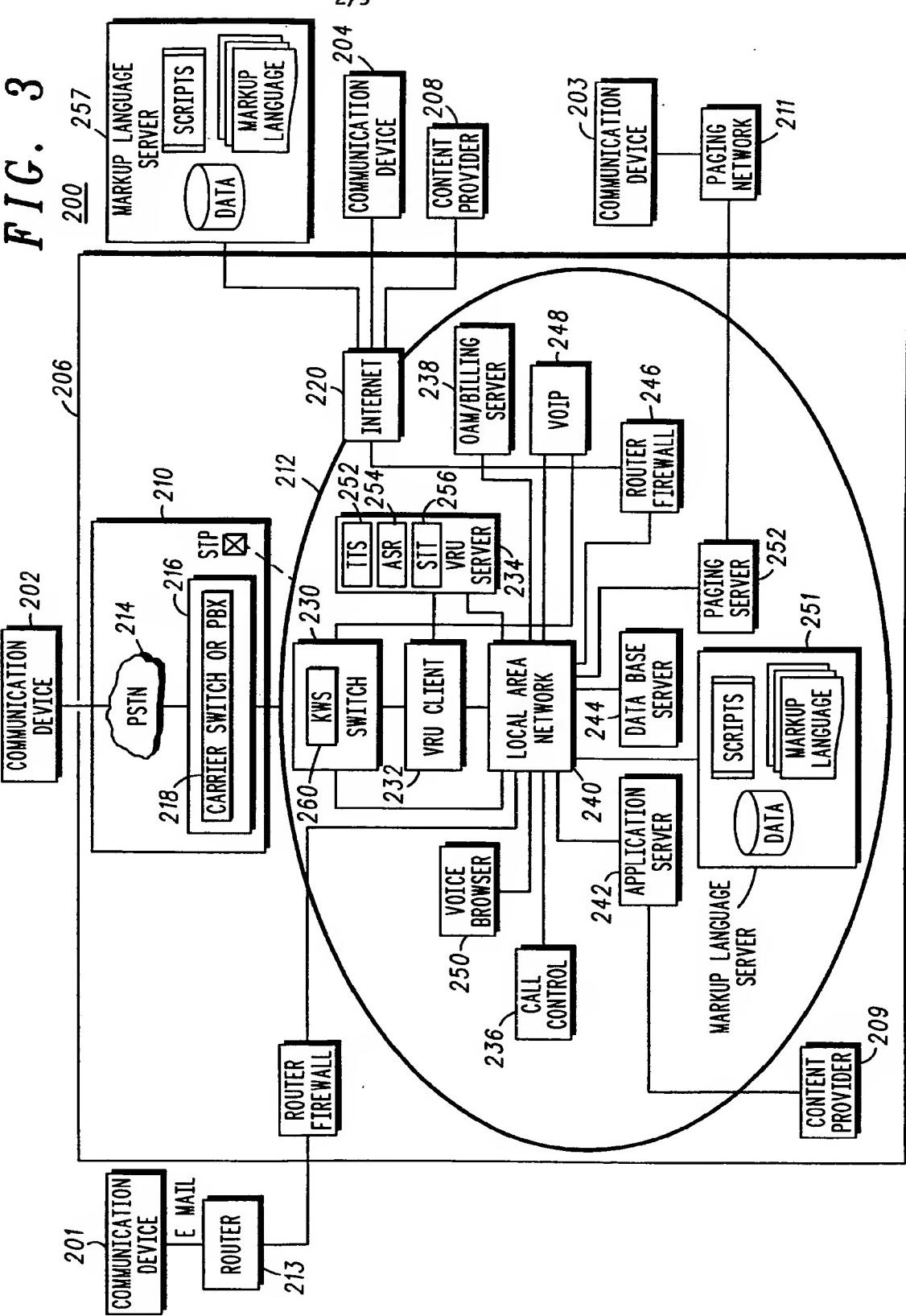


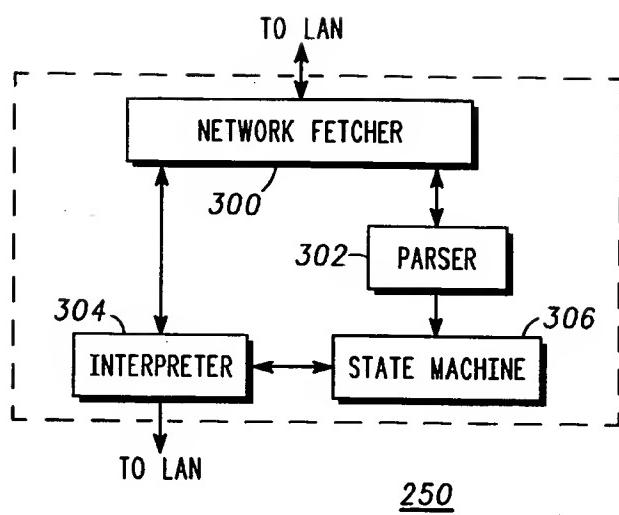
FIG. 2

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FIG. 3



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*FIG. 4*

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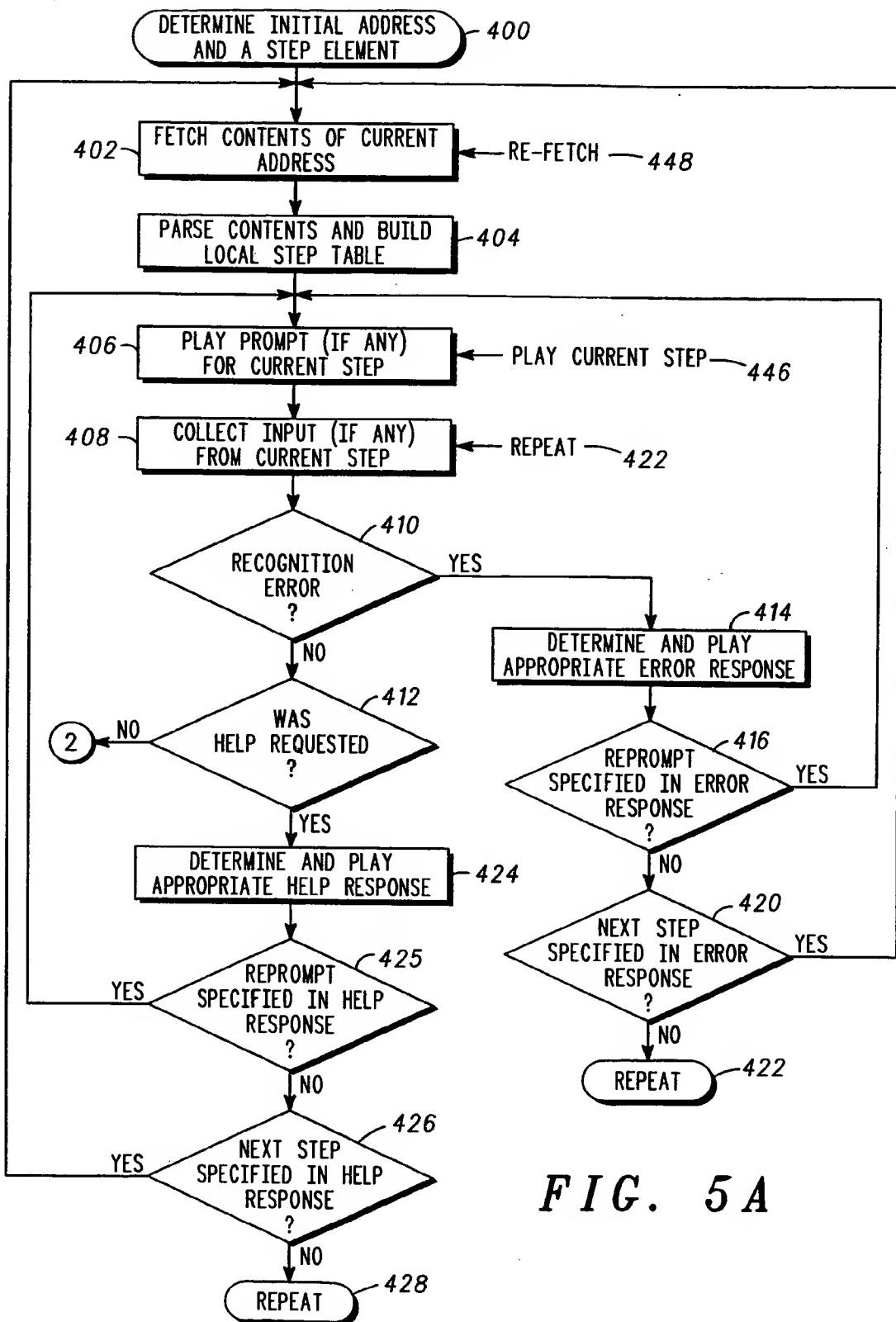


FIG. 5A

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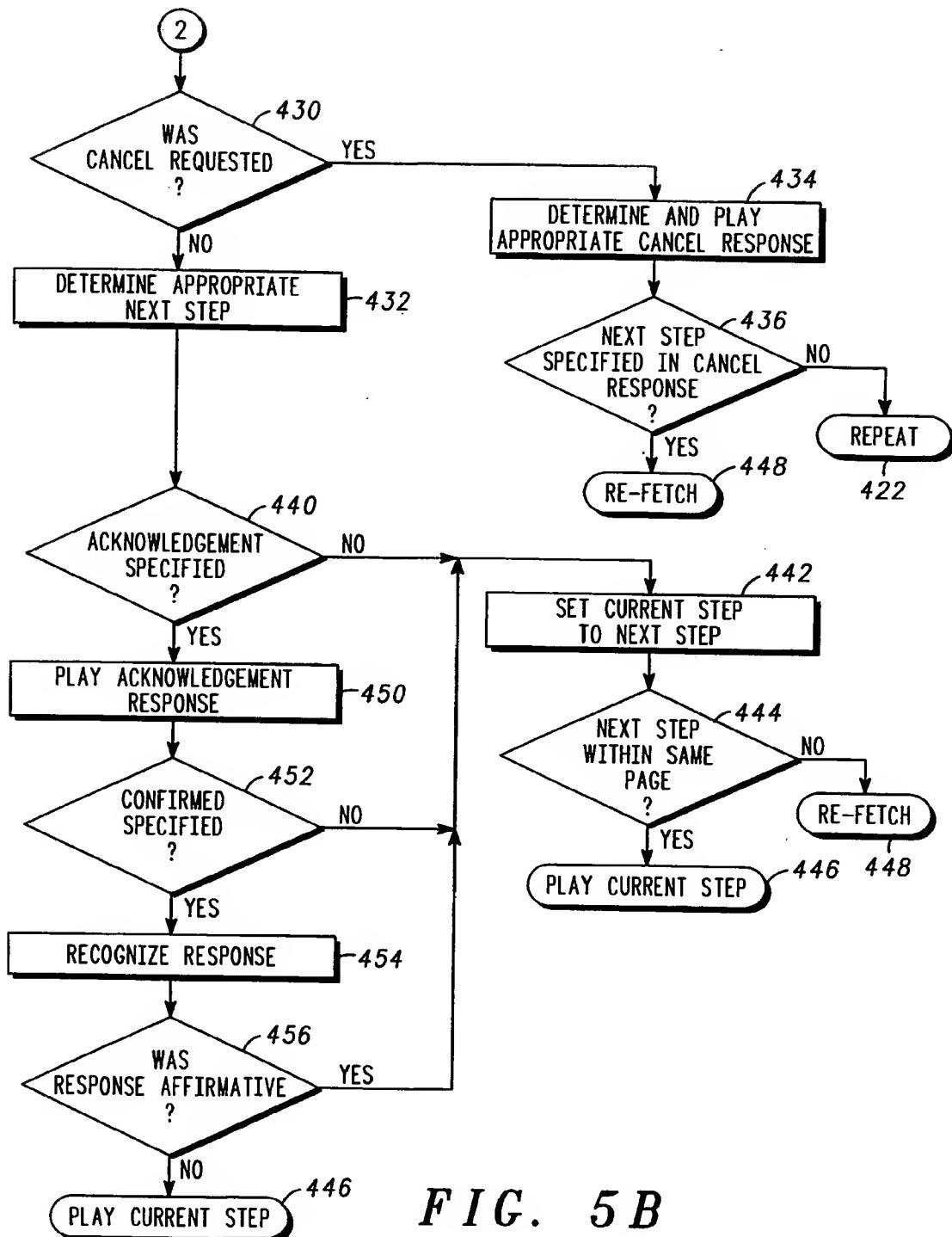


FIG. 5B

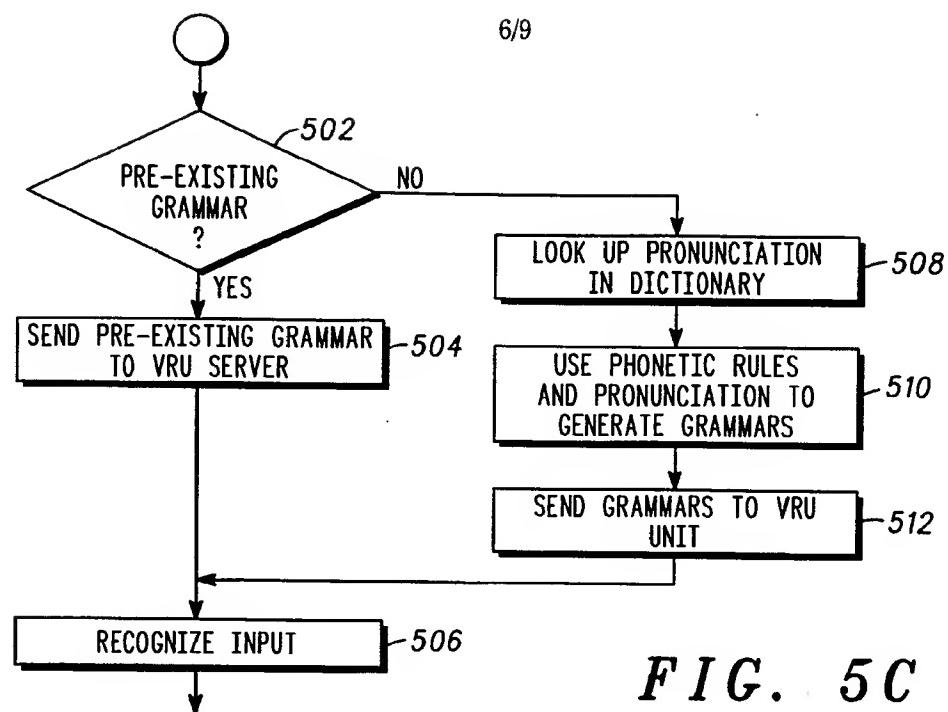


FIG. 5C

```

1 <? XML VERSION="1.0"?>
2 <DIALOG>
3   <STEP NAME="INIT">
4     <PROMPT>WHAT MEAL WOULD LIKE TO HEAR THE SPECIALS
5 FOR?</PROMPT>
6   <INPUT TYPE="OPTIONLIST">
7     <OPTION NEXT="#BKFST"> BREAKFAST </OPTION>
8     <OPTION NEXT="#LUNCH"> LUNCH </OPTION>
9     <OPTION NEXT="#DINNER"> DINNER </OPTION>
10   </INPUT>
11 </STEP>
12
13 <STEP NAME="BKFST">
14   <PROMPT> OUR BREAKFAST SPECIAL IS GREEN EGGS AND HAM </PROMPT>
15 </STEP>
16
17 <STEP NAME="LUNCH">
18   <PROMPT> OUR LUNCH SPECIAL IS A BACON, LETTUCE, AND TOMATO
19 SANDWICH. </PROMPT>
20 </STEP>
21
22 <STEP NAME="DINNER">
23   <PROMPT> OUR DINNER SPECIAL TODAY IS ROAST BEEF AND MASHED
24 POTATOES. </PROMPT>
25 </STEP>
26 </DIALOG>
  
```

FIG. 6

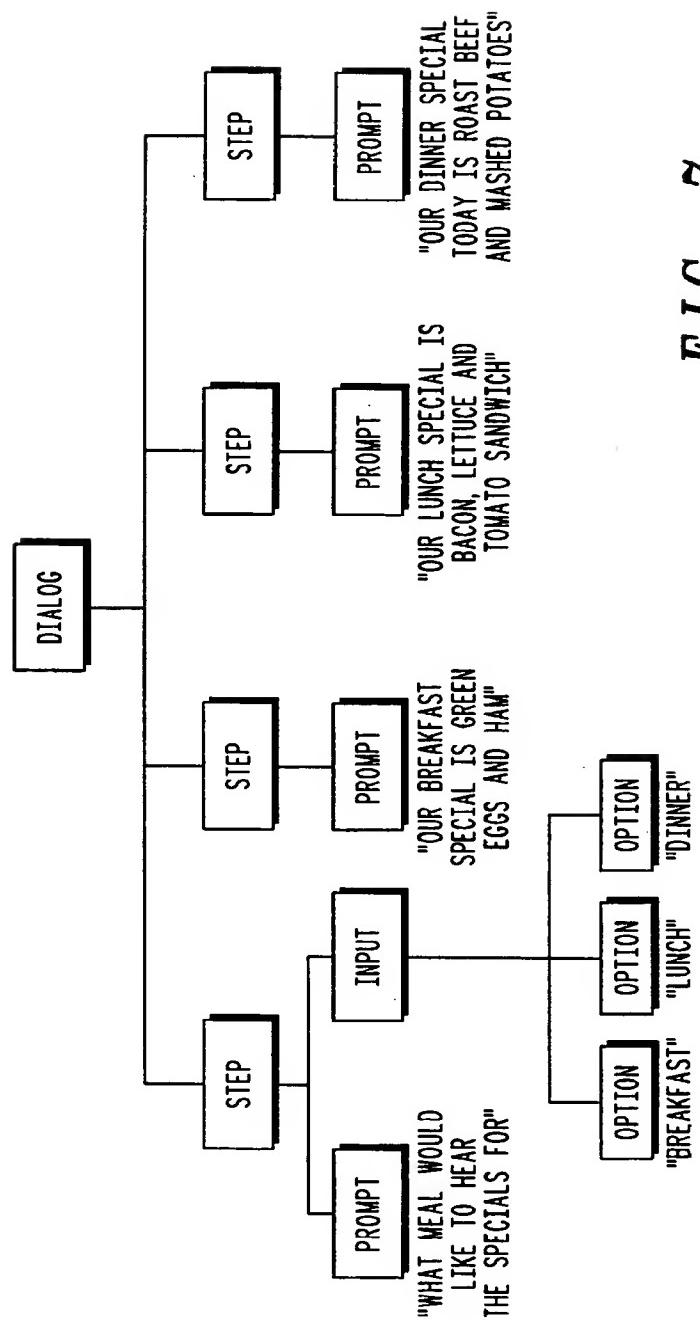
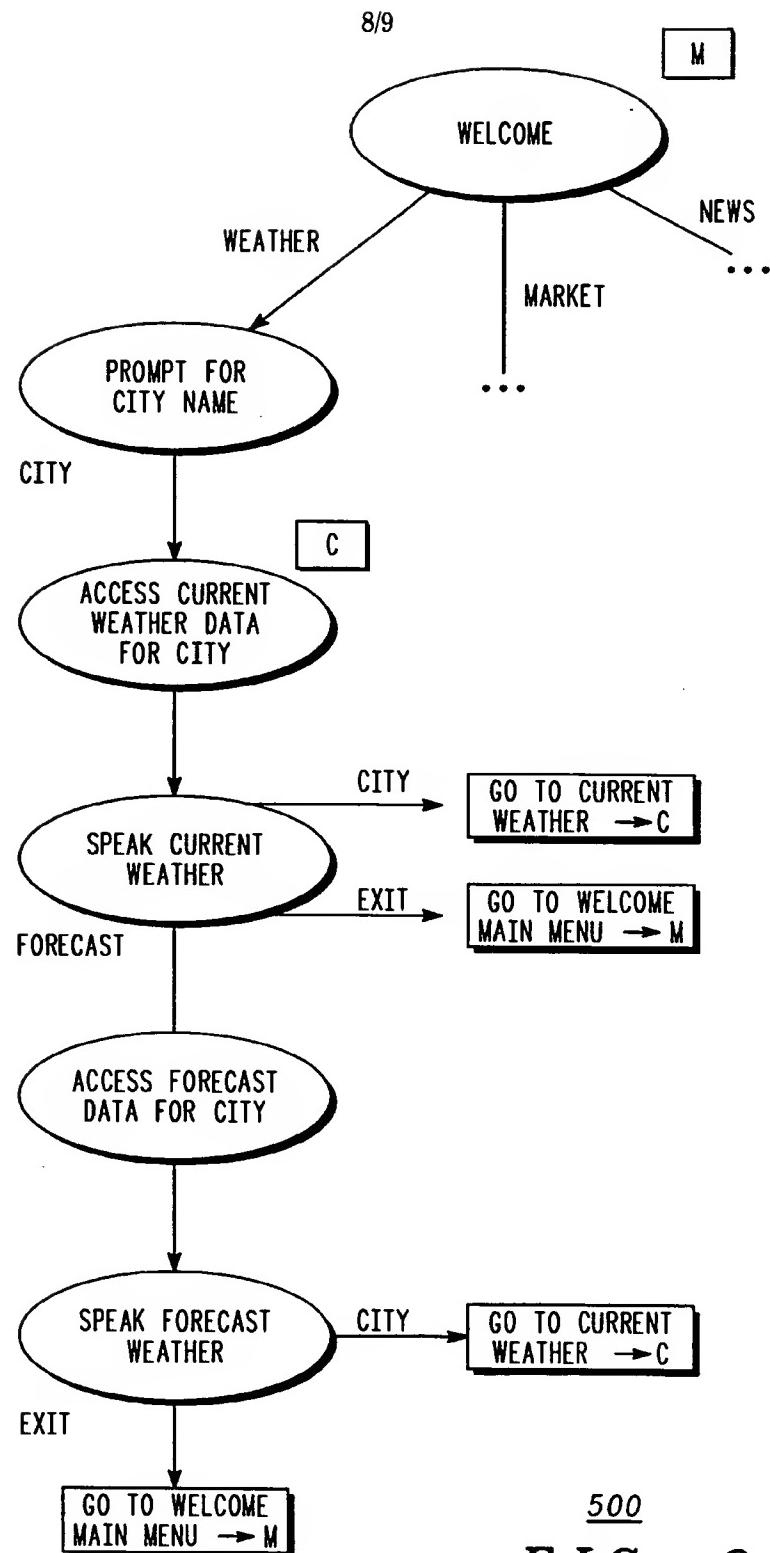
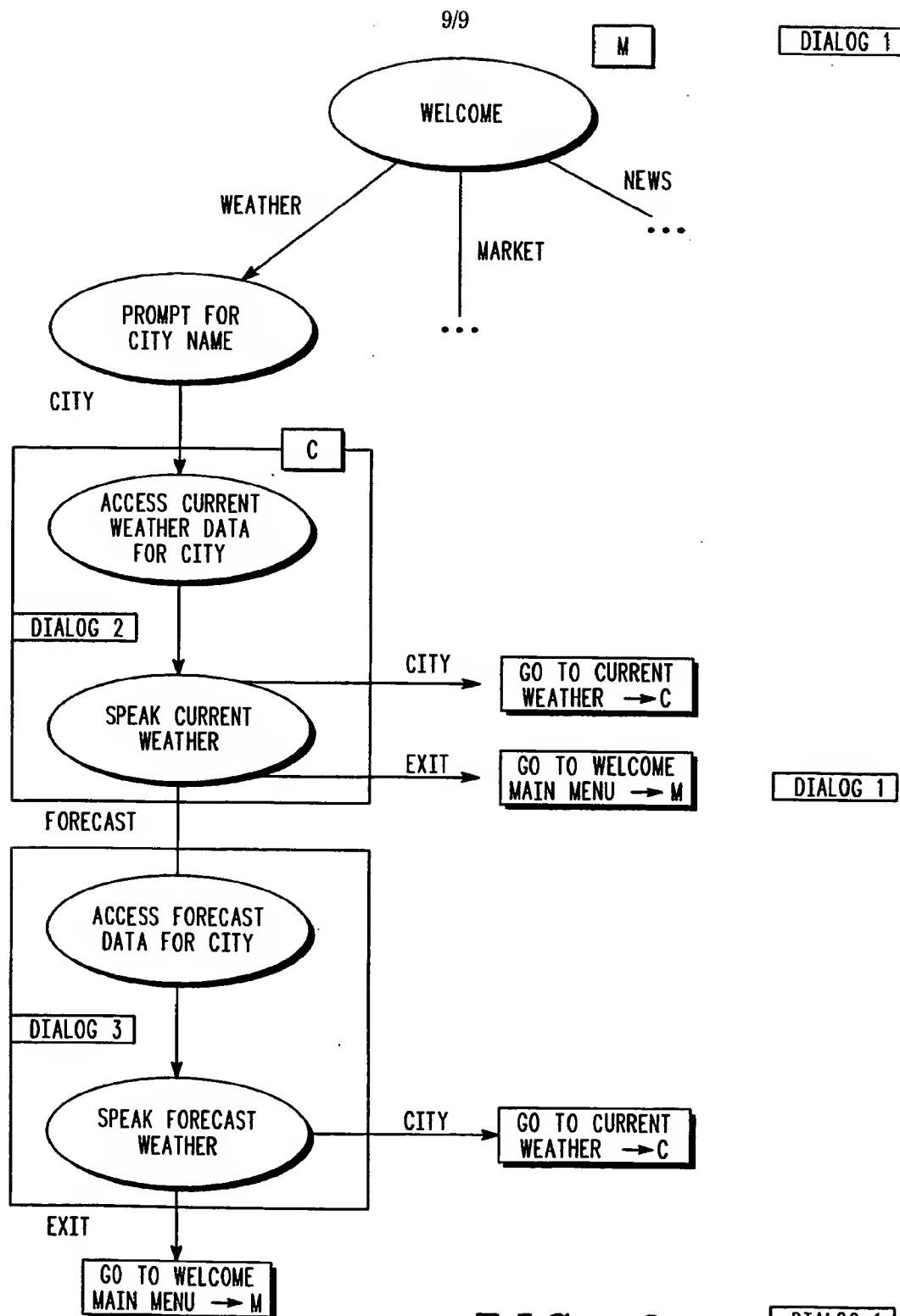


FIG. 7



500  
FIG. 8



## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US99/16776

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : G10L 9/00  
US CL : 704/275.278,260

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 704/275.278,260

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

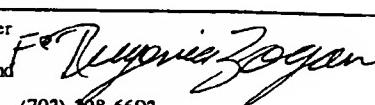
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X,P	US 5,799,063 A (KRANE) 25 August 1998, Abs.	1-15
X,P	US 5,915,001 A (UPPALURU) 22 June 1999, Abs.	1-15

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.  See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:		
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier document published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
08 NOVEMBER 1999	09 DEC 1999
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231	Authorized officer Susan Wieland 
Faxsimile No. (703) 305-9508	Telephone No. (703) 308-6693